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ABSTRACT

This document, which is a presentation of a philosophy of education and human relations, is written in two distinct sections by two different authors. The two authors believe that human relations is very important in education and that the open classroom actually depends on the openness of the teacher. The authors hold in common the view that the open classroom teacher (a) must pay attention to process as well as content; (b) should have a bias for group decision making; and (c) is helped by experience with group exercises, games, simulations, and psycho-social learning experiences (PSLE). In the first section of the book, one author relates his experiences as a teacher of educational psychology and describes the difficult but rewarding effort to have students assume responsibility for themselves and their own learning. The second author describes 16 PSLEs he has used in workshops for teachers and analyzes each according to whether its chief purpose is to simulate a conflict situation, a problem-solving situation, a situation involving leadership, or a situation involving a change in self-concept. (HMD)

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LET'S GET IT TOGETHER

EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCES IN HUMAN RELATIONS

by Joel Perlmutter

Fred Stokley

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About the Pilot Communities Program

The Pilot Communities Program, an experiment in educational change, consists of four teams of teacher-advisors who for the past four years (1967-71) have worked in selected schools in Boston Massachusetts; Bridgeport, Connecticut; Washington, D.C.; and a coastal region in Maine. Their most recent efforts have focused on the training of teachers and teacher aides. A project of Education Development Center (EDC) in Newton, Massachusetts, the Pilot Communities Program has functioned as the New England regional laboratory of the U.S. Office of Education.

Let's Get It Together is one of several publications based upon Pilot Communities' field work on the four sites. Topics treated by other publications in the series include:

- The training and recruiting of teacher aides
- Guidelines for change in the schools
- Innovation teams; their function, evolution and training
- Encounter techniques for the training of

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INTRODUCTION: A CHOICE OF STYLES *

This book has a split personality. Any book that's written by two different people is likely to have a split personality, unless the editor is careful. I'm the editor; I've been careful; and yet the character of this book remains a double one.

It had to be this way. If Fred and Joel, the authors, were to live up to the message in their own book, they had to keep their individuality and come across to you as living people rather than as impersonal, disembodied authorities. We've decided therefore to call each other by our first names throughout these pages.

Fred and Joel differ in style but they agree in other ways, especially in their "let's-get-it-together" philosophy of education and human relations. As former teachers and now as group facilitators, they think the field of human relations has important things to say to teachers and educators. They believe that you can't have an open classroom without an open teacher. In fact, the open classroom is the open teacher. If a student is to learn and grow, in the authors' view, a teacher must be willing to learn and grow along with him. That involves at least two things and usually a third as well. It involves attention to PROCESS as well as content and a bias for GROUP DECISION-MAKING. It usually also helps to be familiar with group exercises, games, and simulations or what the authors call PSYCHO-SOCIAL LEARNING EXPERIENCES.

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*If you've read this introduction before, in the other half of the book

To describe briefly each of these three factors in Fred and Joel's theory of open education:

PROCESS: How We Interact--Unspoken Messages

When a person looks back upon his experiences in school, probably the first thing he remembers is what happened in the classroom between himself and his teachers, between himself and his classmates. He may remember the prankster in the first row who got away with murder or the sexy girl in the seat behind his who used to poke him in the ribs. The chances aren't half so good that he'll remember what the teacher was trying to teach. The authors believe that it's important to pay attention to HOW students and teachers interact in a classroom--not just WHAT they say in words about the day's lesson. They believe a teacher's effectiveness depends less upon the amount of knowledge he brings to class and less upon the design of his lesson plan than upon his awareness of himself as a person and his alertness to the great variety of feelings and perceptions that students bring with them into class. The most effective teacher, in the authors' view, seeks to open up and explore with students areas of personal difference and commonality between them. He lets students know when something troubles him or excites him--and students feel free to do the same.

As one outcome of this reciprocal give-and-take, people in the class group (teacher and students) begin to find out about themselves--how others see them, how their behavior affects others, in what ways their feelings and perceptions are unique and in what ways they're common to all. The teacher [illegible] and says in a new situation. The cyclical process is thus begun of moving from action in a group (or class) to reflection about self to action in the group and back again. Changes in behavior and changes in self-image often go hand in hand--and personal growth is the result.

By paying attention to process and sharing what they really see, the people in the class group get used to growing together and may want to continue the process in other areas of their lives. Learning that's relevant to living--the ostensible goal of formal schooling--then becomes more possible.

GROUP DECISION-MAKING: Democratic or Participative Groups

Both authors think of a teacher as a guide or facilitator, not just as an authority figure setting rules and dispensing knowledge. The teacher-facilitator creates an atmosphere in which students generate their own goals--both individual goals and group goals. They initiate ideas and activities among their classmates as well as with the teacher. The facilitating teacher encourages students to give direction to the class and not to depend always upon assignments and suggestions from the teacher's desk.

Group decision-making closely supports process and growth. A teacher who takes all the initiative for class activities would then be discouraging students from accepting responsibility and becoming self-directed learners. When students who have been trained to depend on teachers leave school, their education

PSYCHO-SOCIAL LEARNING EXPERIENCES: The Person Learning In Semi-Structured Groups

The third idea common to both authors is a methodological one--How do you begin and maintain the interaction process between teachers and students? Human relations speciclists vary widely in strategies for fostering process work. Some rely upon highly structured exercises and agendas. At the other extreme, leaders of encounter groups use few directions and encourage the group to develop ground rules. The authors of this book locate their own preferences somewhere in the middle between tightly-structured exercises and no structure at all. They favor game-like activities which lead people to interact in an intense way. In the exercises the authors call Psycho-Social Learning Experiences (or P.S.L.E.'s), people in a group do something together which leads them to feel something and then they talk about what was done and felt and what they found out about themselves. This combination of DOING, FEELING, and THINKING usually heightens a person's awareness of self and others and may inspire changes in behavior as well as in outlook.

As individuals in the group learn and grow, the group as a whole functions more smoothly and cooperatively as a decision-making body. From a series of exercises, a group of teachers may learn different strategies for solving interpersonal problems, managing inter-group conflicts, and operating as a team that really knows who they are, what they want, and what they can do as a group.

The term PSYCHO-SOCIAL LEARNING EXPERIENCE may sound a bit cumbersome, but each word in the term exercise. It's a LEARNING EXPERIENCE that enhances an individual's awareness of self (the PSYCHO part of it) at the same time as it enhances a group's awareness of its internal functioning and relations with other groups (the SOCIAL part of it). A simpler way to say "Psycho-Social Learning Experience" is to refer to it by its initials, P.S.L.E.

One way of talking about process, group decision-making, and P.S.L.E.'s is Joel's way. His description of a course he once taught in educational psychology tells what the process was like for him--always difficult, sometimes rewarding--of getting students to assume some independent responsibility for their own learning.

Another way of talking about process, group decision-making, and P.S.L.E.'s is Fred's way. In his section of this book (either at the beginning or the end, depending literally on the way you look at it) he describes sixteen P.S.L.E.'s he has used in workshops for teachers and analyzes each according to whether its chief purpose is to simulate a conflict situation, a problem-solving situation, a situation involving leadership, or a situation involving a change in self-concept.

Thirty-one other ways of talking about process, group decision-making and P.S.L.E.'s are wedged between Joel's and Fred's essays in a bibliography of books about group dynamics and P.S.L.E.'s in education.

A thirty-fourth way is mine, and if you've come this far, you've already read it. In one of my meetings with Joel and Fred I volunteered, as editor, to write the general introduction to this book. I suppose if I'm

now breaking from conventional form and declaring myself a person in my own right is because I want a place in the sun, a part of the glory of producing a book. But beyond that, an editor coming out in the open and saying "I'm here too" helps to call attention to a major theme--the importance of dealing with each other as people, not as role-players.

Hopefully, the process for you of dealing with us in this book can begin with your reaction to what I've just written. My personal disclosure is directly modeled after Joel's style of presenting himself. If you like an author to reveal himself in a personal way, you'd probably want to start the book by turning to Joel's essay (p.14 of this end of the book). If, on the other hand, you winced when I said I wanted "a place in the sun," you'll probably be more comfortable with Fred's more objective style (p.12 at the other end of this book).

Personally, as you can see from my own writing, I think there's a place for both styles. We hope that as you read both parts, you'll recognize how they compliment each other--and begin to "get it together."*

Steve Jantzen, editor
Pilot Communities Program
August 1, 1971

*By getting it together, we mean at least four things:

1. Education getting together with human relations experiences, methods, and values
2. Fred's more objective style of wording and writing getting together with Joel's personal style
3. Individual teachers getting together in the full sense that the Black Community means when they use the term
4. Getting people together who could work more effectively if they were on cooperating teams in classes, schools, local neighborhoods and communities

LET'S GET IT TOGETHER

EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCES
IN HUMAN RELATIONS

by Joel Perlmutter

WHERE I'M COMING FROM

I can't promise that anyone will be happier or healthier if he engages in the difficult process of self-exploration and personal growth. All I can tell anyone is what effects these types of experiences have had on me and others with whom I have worked.

The first group session I ever attended was three years ago. Since then I have been in a two-year training program at the Leadership Consulting Service and two other two-week programs at the Human Relations Center of Boston University and numerous weekly groups and weekend workshops as a member and later as group leader or facilitator.

Many of my needs were met in these human relations events. I sought out new experiences and decided to make this my life's work. Although I'm shy in some situations, I enjoyed the meaningful social encounters and continued to desire growth in these groups. My need to know how others felt about me and my idealistic desire to help others while seeking support and recognition were very important to me then and now.

Here's a list of some of the things I learned from my group experiences:

(1) Who I am and want to be--my strengths, needs, goals, assumptions, values and biases.
(2) The usefulness to me and others of expressing anger and other feelings openly.
(3) Why and how I used to help everyone but myself (how I was using them perhaps more than I was helping).
(4) How I reacted to diff[illegible]

But the single most important advantage to human relations for me was not the specific skills or things learned about myself. Most important was the discovery that there was hope for all of us in being human to each other. Even in groups of strangers I learned that people can really care about others, learn from each other and share what's important to them. I was able to apply some of these experiences to my daily life with my wife and family and with colleagues at work and school.

It's exhausting to employ this life style continually, but it's surely a valuable tool when I feel the need to really communicate with someone or help others improve their human relations.

CONTENTS

I. NEW TEACHER IN THE CLASSROOM-A Dilemma in Group Leadership

A personal account of Joel's first formal teaching experience. The teacher and his students analyze what they did together, the process and development of the class as a group and the learning outcomes reported several months later.

A. Preparation of a Frightened Teacher

B. First Day

C. Student's Diary and Teacher Commentary

D. Midterm Crisis

E. Shift in Focus from Process to Content

F. Last Week

G. Evaluation

H. Transfer or Where Do We Go From Here?

II. GLOSSARY--EXAM: A STUDENT-INITIATED EXERCISE

An analysis of the interaction between a student and a teacher on a simulated written exam--and a glossary of terms. Definitions of terms in human relations and group dynamics are treated in two parts.

OBSERVE, LISTEN, SELF-DISCLOSURE, and SHARE RESPONSIBILITY are defined with the student-teacher interaction analyzed, on pages

The other terms, defined without teacher commentary, are listed alphabetically:

CONTRACT
EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY
FEEDBACK
FUNCTION or ROLES
GOALS
OPENNESS
PROCESS
SHARING FEELINGS

For purposes of emphasis and easy reference, the structured exercises or P.S.L.E.'s listed below are set off in the body of Joel's text with a shaded background.

p. 24 Appreciations and Resentments (and Demands)

p. 26 Group Process Components for Observers

p. 28 Comparing the Old and New Class

p. 30 Opinionnaire (on student-teacher roles)

p. 31 Goal Statements

p. 34 Brainstorming or Listing Alternatives (Interpretations of Grading)

p. 41 Awareness of Class Factions

p. 41 Joke on the Teacher

p. 44 Multiple Role or Role Conflict Exercise

p. 45 Role Playing

p. 46 Blindman's Walk-Helping Styles

p. 47 Bragging

I. NEW TEACHER IN THE CLASSROOM

A DILEMMA IN GROUP LEADERSHIP

I was twenty-seven years old and scared that I might fail in my first chance to teach a college course for credit. I knew, of course, how instructors in college were expected to act, but I was determined to be myself and develop my own style of teaching. I believed that in this way it would be most relevant to my students. Now almost a year later, I want to describe what happened to me as my students and I struggled to work out our own novel procedures for learning together. As I write about what happened I'll share my anxieties, fantasies and personal feelings with you. I suppose this may enable you to dismiss me as some sort of odd ball, but I'll take that chance in the hope that you can identify with a writer who shares a part of himself.

My sharing is consistent with my primary objective in writing this essay--to demonstrate the way in which my students and I applied the humanistic principles taught and practiced by teachers, group leaders, clergy and many others, in the classroom.

Before teaching my first class, I had gone through many human relations training workshops similar to those Fred describes in the flip side of this book. It was during these experiences that I learned the value of shared feelings and open and honest communication to and from others. I recognized that different people learn in different ways, and I wanted my course to nurture collaborative learning and experimentation similar to the situations in which I had learned best. Finally, as a teacher I wanted to be a real person, not just someone playing the role of detached expert or lecturer.

A. PREPARATION OF A FREIGHTENED TEACHER

My story begins in the summer of 1970, when a state college in New England hired me to teach a summer course in educational psychology to 34 students in the daytime and 52 students in the evening. The pages that follow describe only the smaller of the two classes, because it achieved greater cohesiveness and more participative decision making. This smaller group met for 75 minutes each weekday for six weeks.

The description of the course in the summer catalogue did not give the slightest clue that I was planning anything unusual, since I didn't write it:

> Educational Psychology (ED. PSYCH) 3 Sem. Hrs.
>
> This will be a general course in educational psychology in which emphasis will be placed on the practical application of psychological principles to classroom situations and problems. Attention will be given to (1) the teacher's understanding of the ways in which levels of development influence teaching and (2) those elements that enter into effective teaching and learning.

If I had written the description, I would have emphasized that we would learn about Ed. Psych. by focusing on what happened in our own class among students and between students and teacher. We would [illegible]

the students who signed up for this course were unprepared for the freedom, the lack of traditional classroom structures and the focus on ourselves which I was planning.

I didn't want to teach a standard course in the standard way because I remembered all too well the frustration of sitting in a classroom completely dominated by the teacher.

As a rule, I didn't like the teachers in my life. So many of them had talked down at me, played the expert, ignored my own interests and opinions. I was a rebel, both at home and at school. I hated to be told what to do and when to do it. I continued my rebellion all the way through graduate school, protesting the university's smug refusal to really hear and respond to my concerns and desires and those of other students.

Luckily, there were some teachers in my life who were inspiring. They were the ones who were real people honestly acknowledging their weaknesses and biases as well as their strengths. The teachers I remember best encouraged students to remind or confront them whenever they indulged in their bad habits like being hypercritical or domineering. Even if we didn't check them hard and often, the invitation was an important recognition that teachers are also fallible and that students can help them and still learn.

These rare teachers, who pushed their pedestals aside and listened to students, presented me with live models for my ideals about teaching, and more importantly, learning. Learning for these teachers was a collaborative effort where students and teachers both brought their of interest to both. It worried me to think that I might not be able to live up to my image of the ideal teacher. And as my anxiety about my first day of teaching mounted, the distasteful methods of lectures, assigned term papers, and tests looked more and more tempting. In these procedures I thought there existed a certain protection against the possibility of my complete failure. Suppose the students didn't like me or my course. What then? If they didn't appreciate me, I could easily see myself labeling them as stupid, narrow-minded or even lower-class. Because of my fear I realized I was only a step away from playing the role of expert, lecturer and the poor scared soul who has to use the gradebook as a whip and threat in order to retain power and prestige. You'll see as you read on that I fell into this trap partially unawares. It's scary to give up power when we feel insecure in our position.

Teaching the course the standard way by lecturing on a series of topics should be easier for most teachers. Almost everyone expects a college instructor to do that. It would be hard for me, however, since I don't like to lecture for more than fifteen minutes at a time, and I don't lecture well. I would be more comfortable, I decided, creating an environment where students actively participated in sharing their own knowledge and learned together with me as their guide. To cover myself against accusations of irresponsibility, I decided to assign readings from a Psych. textbook which I selected. In addition, I would assign Alfred Gorman's Teachers and Learners: The Interactive Process of Education,* which describes theory and exercises in inter-

*Alfred Gorman, Teachers and Learners: The Inter-

personal relations and analyses group process in classrooms. I had done all I could to prepare for teaching the course, and the time had come to begin.

B. FIRST DAY

I can vividly remember what I did and felt on that first day of teaching. I wore my flashy wide tie to show how cool I was. I drove up to the campus policeman and announced with both pride and discomfort that I was an instructor. I passed a group of attractive coeds and recalled how the college girls in my day swooned over some of their male teachers. Would I have some of these lovely gals in my class staring into my eyes?

I went to the office to pick up my official papers and instructions and nervously observed the other teachers check in. I did mental gyrations comparing myself to them.

It was time to go to class. I walked down the hall to the door and kept walking, stretching my neck to see inside. I had been assigned to a large lecture hall. It was like an amphitheater where the chairs looked down on a blackboard and to stand. There were about twenty students inside, and I expected at least thirty so I stayed out in the hall trying to look casual. I was really avoiding the discomfort of standing in front of all those students waiting to start.

I had a supply of life savers and gum in case my throat dried out and had been to the water fountain three times already. I decided to buy an orange drink to bring into class with me for something else to clutch for security. People had stopped coming into the room. The time had come. Clutching my briefcase and orange drink, I walked in, put my things on the desk, opened my briefcase, and nervously spread out an assortment of crutches--detailed notes on what I wanted to say, books, outline and schedule of topics for class discussion. Although I had nervously looked up a few times while going through all my motions, I was done playing with my props for now and had to face all those students. I came around the front of the table on which I had spread out my things and jumped up to sit on it. I had always felt more comfortable with my teachers who did that, and dis-

covered it's an effective way of covering up unsteady legs. You can even swing your legs and cross them to deal with some of the tension.

Looking up and around at the class there were some smiling faces which were a comfort to me. Many students were flipping pages in their books or getting out their new notebooks, ready to take notes.

I gulped, cleared my throat a few times as I do when I'm nervous and began.

I started the only way I knew how to when I'm scared. I told the students about myself and what I expected to happen. I told them this was my first formal teaching experience, that I was nervous as well as excited about experimenting with new methods and that I preferred to be called Joel. Then I asked them some rather straightforward, factual questions about themselves. How many had taught before? How many were freshmen, sophmores, etc? How many were married? The last question was significant. Through it, I established my own identity as a married man and hopefully dispelled some of the fantasies of

those females who, I was sure, had designs on me. (In retrospect, I see that I was also projecting my own fantasies onto them.)

Self Disclosure*

My legs dangled easily below me as I sat on the table. I informed the class of my intentions for the course and shared with them my personal experiences and feelings about learning. I stressed my desire for each of us to share responsibility for our own learnings. I said if they didn't learn what they wanted to learn, then we all are to blame--both the teacher and the students. The classroom, I said, could be our safe learning laboratory where we all could share in suggesting and trying out new procedures and evaluating our reactions together. I stressed that this was a collaborative venture, but that it depended on individual initiative.

Share Responsibility

The course requirements, I told them, would be flexible, but I did expect them to work. They were to regard Gorman's book, Teachers and Learners, as a manual. I wanted them to use it at first to understand vocabulary and methods which we could implement later on. It could help us focus on what was happening between us in our own class (the process). I didn't want them to memorize insignificant points but to apply the readings to ourselves in our class in a meaningful and creative way. I continued sharing my expectations by stating that I wanted them to come to class regularly, so they could participate in class discussion but I wasn't going to take attendance after the tenth day (as was required). As for tests, I hoped they would evaluate themselves and each other. The school unfortunately required that I give a midterm and final exam, but I hoped to make both relevant to their needs as well as to mine and the school's. If the school also required a term paper as students thought, I planned to allow substitution of an individual or group project such as tutoring or observing children or making a class presentation.

Contract

I was naive enough to believe I had presented my initial expectations clearly and had offered students a chance to disagree and to negotiate a more acceptable agreement or contract with me. It took me two weeks to realize that I had been playing games with them. By remaining flexible, I had created more ambiguity than many could tolerate. Considering just how much it was a strange new experience for them, how could I believe that their fears and mistrust of teachers which had been formed over years of schooling would be overcome by my being an open, nice guy during the first class?

Openness

They, like all of us, had been misled and fooled before when a teacher's actions differed from her words. (Rather than use "his" or "her" when referring to teachers and my students, I have decided to use "her" in recognition of the greater number of women in the profession and of the goals of the women's liberation movement.) It was easier for me--still a student in grad school--to share and identify with my students than it was for most of them to share and identify with me. None of my students had been in my role as a teacher in college, while I had been and still was in their role as student.

My introduction over, I sought to involve them right away so they'd believe my statement that I was interested in their feelings and concerns and active participation. I proposed an exercise "to learn if and how

*The marginal notes are elaborated on in the

and to use this sharing as a means to begin to get to know each other." Each student was to think about and answer the following questions:

APPRECIATIONS AND RESENTMENTS

1. What do you appreciate and what do you resent about your education to this point (what turned you on and turned you off)?

Functions Or Roles

2. What functions or roles were played by the teacher in your ideal learning experience(s) and where did they occur? In a group? In a class?

Educational Philosophy

3. How do these "ideal" experiences relate to the formulation of your own philosophy of teaching?

The exercise enables people to look at each other in a balanced way, separating what they perceive as good and bad. It often helps us listen to criticism when it is balanced by appreciation. This tends to communicate realistic acceptance of people as they are rather than the rejection often suggested by criticism alone.

Demands of each other are often added as a final step so that plans for the future relationship can be made.

As we shared our responses, I listed them on the blackboard. Most were surprised to discover that many exciting learning experiences occurred without any teacher present. Others remembered learning from lectures, books, and informally over a drink with friends or teachers or from other life experiences. As usual, I had asked too many questions at once, and none was answered in any depth--but at the same time, the discussion had been lively and personal.

That was the end of my first day as a teacher. I left the room feeling quite pleased. The students and I had begun to become acquainted, to review and share our expectations, experiences, and biases. Even though it was on a somewhat superficial level, we had tried to be as honest as we could be with each other at the time.

We had shared in compiling a list of personal experiences to demonstrate that we all learn differently and that flexibility in both teaching and learning is essential to effectiveness in any classroom whether we call it open or closed. I had acted the part of my model teacher--friendly, approachable. My fear of being trapped into the traditional roles of administrator, taskmaster, and policeman largely evaporated for now. I was teaching my first course in my own way, and it felt good.

C. STUDENT'S DIARY AND TEACHER COMMENTARY

One woman student, Aurelie Sousa, kept a diary about her view of the course. She started this on her own initiative as a way of documenting the group's development. I'll quote from it regularly so that the reader can hear a different perspective. I'm grateful to Aurelie for these notes because they helped me recall many of the events I would have forgotten and enabled me to see the class through another's eyes.*

Observe

Monday, July 6

In the lecture hall. Joel told us this was his first class, that he wanted to be called by his first name and other information about himself. He asked for class involvement in discussion of what makes a good learning situation. Some people participated in discussion.

Tuesday, July 7

Fishbowl experiment with two observing groups. Fishbowl group effectively ignored the task which was to discuss goals for class learning. This went on until the last five minutes when Kathy asked how any of this discussion would be useful. "They told me we would cover certain material in Ed. Psych. and we aren't dealing with it all." This broke the deadlock. The people in the fishbowl became better known to group

FISHBOWL

Ordinarily, in the procedure that group leaders call the "fishbowl" one group of people sit in a circle (fishbowl) in the center of the room while another group sits all around them and observes. Since my class met in a lecture hall, those being observed had to sit in front and face the rest of the class. One row of the class was supposed to listen for what was said--the content. The others were to observe how people talked to each other and interacted--the process.

I handed out this guide sheet to the observer assigned to watch for process:

---

*What we both describe is obviously limited by our own perceptions. You may want to note in the margin where our biases limit our perceptions. N...

Group Process Components For Observers

Process Observers Checklist*
Things to Look for:

PARTICIPATION:

1. Did all have opportunities to participate?
2. Were some excluded?
3. Was an effort made to draw people out?
4. Did a few dominate?

LEADERSHIP:

1. Did a leader, as such, emerge?
2. Was a leader designated?
3. Was leadership shared?
4. Was there any structuring of the group?

ROLES:

1. Who initiated ideas?
2. Were they supported and by whom?
3. Did anyone block?
4. Who helped push for decisions?

DECISION-MAKING:

1. Did group get a lot of ideas suggested before beginning to decide, or did it begin deciding on only a single idea?
2. Did everyone agree to the decisions made?
3. Who helped influence decisions of others?

COMMUNICATION:

1. Did people feel free to talk?
2. Was there any interrupting or cutting people off?
3. Did people listen to others?
4. Was there clarification of points made?

SENSITIVITY:

1. Were members sensitive to the needs and concerns of each other?

I asked the people in the fishbowl to try to ignore the observing group, but it took some time before they acted naturally and were unconscious of their audience.

The usual procedure is for the process and content observers to feedback their observations to the center group, telling what they saw in a nonevaluative way, but there wasn't much time for this in the short class period. Toward the end of the discussion Kathy protested the entire procedure. This was a critical incident. It "freed up" the whole class to express more positive and negative feelings. Since I was a silent observer I supported Kathy's statement after the exercise. I did try to show that I encouraged and trusted negative comments even more than positive ones this early in the course. As is always the case there were the blind and faithful supporters of the methods I had suggested. Although it felt good to hear their support, I knew they couldn't be very discriminating, since I hadn't yet given them enough description of what I'd like to do for anyone to buy it wholeheartedly.

Wednesday, July 8

Evaluate yesterday. Joel asked for volunteers for new fishbowl. Not many people volunteered. Those who did became better known to group. Tom made some

remarks which seem to indicate he has insights into group process. Several people voiced their feelings at being at a loss.

It was difficult for me after asking for volunteers not to have anyone respond. What does a "democratic" teacher do? I clutched and persisted rather than doing what would have been more useful--opening up a discussion of students' reasons for hesitating. Maybe Kathy's anger yesterday had scared them. Some may have been shy. The topic I suggested for discussion may have been unclear or irrelevant to them.

At the end of class I announced that I had arranged for us to meet in what I thought was a nicer room-in a new building. I disliked the room we had been assigned and felt the new setting with air conditioning and all seats on one level was far superior. Before ending in the old room, I asked the class to take out a piece of paper and to describe the room we were in, the effects it had on them, and the mood it created. They kept these and described their new surroundings near the end of the next class. Most students preferred the new classroom but the underlined comments show negative reactions as well.

OLD CLASS	NEW CLASS
boring, dreary	pleasing, more modern
confining, unsuitable for classroom discussions	less closed in, easier to move around, more potential
conscious of eyes behind me, difficult to see other students	
hot	motivatingly cool, too cold
poor acoustics	reduced outside noise
chair uncomfortable	more relaxed and comfortable
too big yet crowded	don't feel as close a group
good for the first few classes but puts too much emphasis on teacher for later classes	more equality
	less lecture-oriented
	seating arrangement awkward
focuses on teacher as authority but at bottom of room	easier to see and talk to people
feel hidden	

Thursday, July 9

Moved to new room. Sat facing forward. After some discussion someone suggested making a circle. Everyone used name tags tacked on desks. Very helpful.

At one point in the class, I felt like leaving the room for a few minutes for some water. While I was out, the students moved their chairs from parallel rows into a circle. I was pleased to find this upon returning because it appeared that the class was beginning to act independently of me. I was pleased because the students didn't change to the circle when I suggested it but did when I wasn't there. Previously, I had indicated to the class my preference for arranging the chairs in a circle and placing name tags in front of their chairs so that we could all see and refer to each other by name.

At the end of the class, I asked students to fill out a questionnaire so they'd begin to explore where they stood in relation to different teaching styles and strategies. (See next page if you wish to answer the questionnaire. You may compare your own opinions with those of my students on the following page.)

OPINIONNAIRE ABOUT THE ROLES OF TEACHER AND STUDENT*

Directions: Indicate in the spaces provided whether you agree or disagree with the following statements. Write either +2 (strongly agree), +1 (mildly agree), 0 (undecided or neutral), -1 (mildly disagree), or -2 (strongly disagree).

Teachers
Learners

_____ 1. Students should have an equal voice in planning the course content.

_____ 2. Students should have an equal voice in planning the course process.

_____ 3. Students should decide on their own final grades by themselves.

_____ 4. Students should evaluate their progress in collaboration with other students for grade determination.

_____ 5. Students should evaluate their own progress in collaboration with the teacher for grade determination.

_____ 6. The teacher ought to do all the planning in the course because he knows most about the subject matter.

_____ 7. Outside reading should always be handled by having each student turn in a written report to the teacher.

_____ 8. Using student committees for learning and reporting is a valuable part of the course.

_____ 9. Lecturing by the teacher is the best way to cover the subject matter.

_____ 10. Teachers should allow the students to participate in planning the course work.

_____ 11. Students can often learn more from each other than they can from the teacher.

_____ 12. Seats should be moved into a circle for class discussions.

_____ 13. Committee work wastes too much time. The teacher should do the teaching.

_____ 14. It is important that students in a class know each other while the class is in session.

_____ 15. The teacher should call on people in class when they do not volunteer.

*Adapted from [illegible]

Student Responses

-2	-1	0	+1	+2
4	6	2	14	6
3	1	0	14	4
4	15	3	6	4
7	7	1	15	2
0	2	2	12	15
15	14	1	2	1
22	7	1	0	1
0	1	0	12	19
9	19	3	1	0
0	0	0	14	19
0	4	2	19	5
0	2	3	12	15
13	13	2	3	0
2	2	0	7	20
7	11	5	7	2

GOAL STATEMENTS

On the back of the questionnaire students wrote their GOALS for the course. Words that they used to describe their goals--"process-content," "sensitivity and awareness," "comfort and meaningfulness"--suggested that they were already greatly influenced by the vocabulary and value system used by Gorman and by me. A few representative excerpts from their goal statements are quoted below; my comments on their statements are in parentheses.

I have never had the opportunity to participate in planning a course.... I am a little frightened actually and do not know where to begin.

I am just beginning to get a degree and do not know just what to expect. I hesitate to put into words just what I want. (It sounds as if she may be asking me to tell her what I expect of her so she can want that.)

I particularly worry about the behavior problems and even more, the child who refuses to participate. (It would have been such a waste to talk of this only in the abstract instead of focusing on our own class as we eventually did.)

I have never had a course like this. I guess I am just curious to see what will happen. It's almost like I am a little scared

react to the idea even though I have thought about it for a long time. It's like when you were a kid and looked at the shiny red bicycle in the store window. You wanted it for as long as you could remember. Suddenly one day you find that it has been given to you. You touch it, look at it, walk it around, but for some reason you are a little hesitant about riding it 'cause you don't want to scrape it or bang it up. (Or fall on your face.)

Friday, July 10

The class sat in a circle. Decided to choose a moderator. Jim allowed group freedom to discuss topic at hand. Group feeling as a whole seems to be "ah--progress!" Many people knew each other's names. There seemed to be a feeling the group was starting to take shape. Mark said, "Let's not wait from now on to form a circle--we'll just do it."

Sharing Feelings

I had requested that we set aside at least fifteen minutes at the end to evaluate how each session had gone and to summarize what we had learned and felt about what happened. In the evaluation I remember complimenting Jim on the functions and roles I thought he had played beautifully. Jim had remarked at one point that he thought the group was digressing from the topic of discussion, and asked them if his perception was accurate. His gentle intervention served a needed purpose of focusing the group's attention on the agreed-

Monday, July 13

The class sat in a circle. Matthew as moderator with a directed sort of discussion. Covered the content the group decided to discuss, but the group feels they have lost some indefinable spontaneous quality we had Friday. Most people felt this was because of the directed moderating done by Matthew. I find I know three-fourths of the people in the class by name--this is unusual (as compared to most classes).

A clergyman by profession, Matthew had experience acting as group moderator. A bit more directive than Jim had been on Friday, he asked the group specific questions and then asked each person in turn for his opinion on the question. Many students felt they were competent to ask their own questions and that Matthew controlled the discussion too much. It's ironic that many students missed the spontaneity during Matthew's directive leadership and yet continua ly requested greater structure from me the instructor. It seems they didn't want just any structure but they wanted mine.

Tuesday, July 14

Evaluation of yesterday. Many people spoke up and said that yesterday's meeting lacked something. This hurt Matthew's feelings and made the group hesitant to get to know each other better, or to take the role of moderator and be put in Matthew's position. Pros and cons as to value of a moderator. Individuals are questioning if this method will teach them anything in terms of content. Some people want more directive approach and feel more comfortable on days when the

Many people are asking: "When will we get down to business?"

During the evaluation discussion I stepped in to support what Matthew had done. I stressed the safety people needed in order to take the risks of volunteering and putting themselves up for possible criticism. Sometimes when we try to be helpful, I told them, people take it as criticism. A good way to lessen this possibility is to give feedback by saying to someone, "your actions made me feel uncomfortable" rather than "you were wrong." This helps us to stay in the position of helper rather than judge and critic when we really want to help. Of course we can't cover up our real feelings with words. Process People hear our sincerity in the way we say something (the process) rather than just hearing the specific words (the content) we use.

Wednesday, July 15

Broke up into three committees: (1) Test and evaluation group, (2) Moderator or no moderator, (3) Content and process. Groups met for most of period and came together to present ideas. Each group felt they covered the task and came up with several alternate and viable plans of action. Some frustration that they couldn't make the final decision and had to bring it back to large group to decide. Feeling was good on the whole--we made much progress.

Each of the above three committees was chosen because of the class concern in those areas.

As an exercise for myself I listed the areas of educational psychology that my course hadn't yet covered included: the history, philosophy and method of science.

I shared this list with the class and suggested we do something about filling the gaps. We decided to have sub-groups make presentations to the class on areas of interest to fulfill our goals. Goals

D. MIDTERM CRISIS

In the second week student anxieties about tests and grades rose to the surface and soon dominated almost every class session for two weeks. Aurelie wrote:

Thursday, July 16

Evaluation of committee ideas. The group tried to decide what to do about midterm, grades, final, etc. New ideas presented. Much discussion of topic and no one is straying or ignoring it, but no decisions are being reached. The level of frustration seems to be building as people feel they must progress to know what to study for final, midterm or whatever.

Joan led discussion in non-directed way. Many of the group are getting upset today--possibly because the subject under discussion concerns grades. We all have to decide what we're going to do, and we can't seem to make any decisions at all--including majority rules. However, no one person seems to be blocking, and people seem desperate to decide. There are no "bad guys." We did decide to bring in questions tomorrow which will be mimeographed and passed out. What we do with the questions still remains to be decided

Pattie--who has had a difficult time adjusting to such non-directed activity and says she feels uncomfortable not knowing what to study--nonetheless, made some insightful comments about Joel's teaching style. (He has never set the limits 'till today.) Irene made some insightful comments about the freedom of the group and the difficulties it presents. People didn't use name cards. The group seems to feel they know each other--at least by name.

The freedom in the class, at this point, had become debilitating. Joan and others tried to intervene and give direction but they were largely ignored. Maybe a norm had developed of "don't anyone here except the teacher take over." I wondered if a first grade class would have reacted differently to a similar lack of structure and focus. Maybe college students had been trained to expect everything to be decided for them and it was impossible to offset the years of such training.

Friday, July 17

Mark initiated the discussion. People wrote their questions on mimeographed sheets and Sally took them to be dittoed. Anne questioned Joel as if he were a participating group member. Joel said he would like to be more of a participating member. Mark wants to get things going and accepts role of moderator. Discussion of grading, evaluation and self-evaluation. Irene, Joan and Kathy in heated discussion. Mark effectively kept discussion on track. Asked for vote and got majority decision. During this session the group managed to agree on nine different decisions.

The different meanings and uses of grades became

BRAIN STORMING
OR LISTING
ALTERNATIVES
(INTERPRETATIONS)
OF GRADING*

1. Should we grade ourselves by absolute standards set by the teacher?
2. Or should we compare ourselves to our classmates,
3. Or to our own individual starting points?
4. How about effort?
5. Study time?
6. Study time relative to available time?

Each of us wrestled with these perplexing questions.

*For further discussion of grading see Wad-Ja-Get? The grading game in American Education by

The midterm crisis emphasized the point Paul Nash makes in Authority and Freedom*--lack of structure doesn't always mean more freedom. Sometimes structure is releasing. By insuring some security it enhances freedom. By the same principle, absence of structure or leadership limits everyone's freedom. Although my course lacked some of the traditional structures there seemed to be different expectations of how much structure is best. Some wanted less while most would have liked more.

*Paul Nash, Authority and Freedom in Education, New York, John Wiley & Sons (1966).

But to return to the specific issues--tests and grades. I didn't see it as a problem at first, but my "flexible plans" for tests and evaluation created great confusion and frustration among my students. In effect this is what I told them:

I believe your personal evaluation of yourself and your work is more important than my opinion of it. I'll be giving you my evaluation as well, but it will be offered strictly in the spirit of helpfulness, not as criticism or judgment. I'd appreciate help in making up the questions for the midterm exam, and you can take the test at home if you like. Then I'd like all of us to share reactions and feedback with each other. I as the teacher have to retain the right to change your grade although I expect I'll agree with most of your judgments.

It's clear to me now that despite all protestations to the contrary, I personally wanted to retain some power as keeper of the grades. I deceived myself into believing that I was remaining flexible. In fact, I held all the final decisions--and the students knew it. I didn't think I could allow them complete control over their final grades, partly because I was afraid of my boss hearing about it and also because I felt a certain amount of pleasure in the status and power of grade-giving--and I didn't want to give it up.

That my attitudes and policies were ambiguous occurred to me after I encouraged students to bring their own test questions to class, and then we wound up choosing a question I had made up myself. Each student drafted a general test question and I left them with the burden of choosing among their own questions. After only

own as a compromise solution. My intervention saved them from the dilemma of choosing and also proved how much they really needed me. The outcome probably suggested to many that teachers were better than students in making up exam questions. Because I subconsciously wanted them to recognize my own question as superior, I didn't see the quality of their questions. I really didn't read their questions, but after class, I discovered at least six of theirs were as good, if not better, than mine.

The rising tension in the class troubled me. I was uncertain about how much initiative I could take before students became dependent on me for everything. Was I contradicting my goal of shared responsibility if I told them what I thought or even what they should do? Outside of class, I talked informally with five or six students about the problem. Many stopped to talk in the library where we worked and studied together. Just being available and not hidden in an office was an advantage in listening and in communicating with students, although it was sometimes time-consuming too.

Monday, July 20

Listening

Evaluate Friday. I am moderator. Group morale very low. Discuss midterm, evaluate Friday, discuss content of what we want to learn. The group voted to have Joel make up one question which we will know in advance and write in class either Friday or Monday. Frank said that without a teacher setting the goals, the group is afraid to set goals too high and fail. Kathy says she likes sitting in rows. Matthew, bowing to pressure about the importance of clothes, wore a T-shirt to class (instead of his usual tie and jacket). Vic

wrote. Joel described problem-solving methods for group and how we could get at the bottom of our decision-making difficulties. Group still dissatisfied. Joel is very discouraged also. Frank has had some experience with brainstorming, he says. When Joel was at the board he interrupted Joel and Joel sat down. Then Frank said he did it on purpose because he knew Joel would sit down. Several people came to Joel's defense--they liked him to take leadership and show possible ways out of this morass we're in. Pat, Mark and Anne are very angry and frustrated. Everyone feels they would like to break up into smaller groups.

I thought spreading the exam over two days was a waste of time. I stated my feeling but left it at that. I did make a dig at the group's decision about writing the midterm in class. I said, there seemed to be less flexibility in the group's decision than I felt permissible. It would have been acceptable to me for those who wished to write their exams at home.

Despite this resolution of the midterm question, the situation was still unsettling for us all. The pressures on me as teacher had become tremendous. Many students demanded I do certain things to remedy the situation while others withdrew by sitting back and waiting. We discussed what was blocking--and what little was helping--the process of coming to terms with individual and group goals. I stressed the need to implement measures immediately since people's frustration threshold had been reached, and they had become unproductive. A few said they couldn't read for the course, they were so tense about it. Some came up to me after class and offered support and suggestions. I went home troubled and perplexed. Then, while compiling a bibliography of Groups at Work* and I came across a passage (p.151) that was important to me. Thelan described how he had confused members of a group he was leading by communicating the following mixed message: "I have confidence in you--but you need my help." This simple passage crystalized one of the problems for me. I thought it through and felt much better.

Just seeing the problem clearly, presented some solutions. It's ironic that I couldn't solve my own problems with the problem-solving skills I teach others. I guess I had been so involved in the problem and felt so weak that I had forgotten about my own problem-solving skills. I couldn't wait to get to class the next morning to test out my ideas with the class.

Tuesday, July 21

Joel told group he felt part of trouble was that he was giving out ambiguous and conflicting signals as to his expectations. This seemed to be helpful to group. Group broke into subgroups of like interests which will give presentations to the large group and get at the course content in this way.

In order to recall all the points I wanted to cover, I wrote down exactly what I wanted to say. In re-reading this, it appears I had yet to resolve my confusion about structure and freedom. I said something like:

"I'd like to clarify some of the ambiguity where I'm at fault. I have faith in you and in what you've got to

*Thelan, H., Dynamics of Groups at Work

offer. However, I realize that I've been giving you mixed messages because I too wanted to feel needed and important. The mid-term was an example of this. I offered a question as mine alone rather than admitting that it was a composite of different people's suggestions.

I've also been more ambiguous than necessary about grading. I hope it's obvious that I don't think grades tell much and whatever they do tell they do it inaccurately. I've tried to play down or deny their importance despite the fact that they are important to you. I realized that I could be clearer by saying that I expect most people should receive B's if they work, think, and learn (something). I don't like giving D's unless someone is trying hard for one. Some will probably get A's and C's if they distinguish themselves somehow.

I want to reassure you I'd rather grades not be used. I surely don't want your concern over them to destroy our ability to work together. Since grades are required we'll use them but not let them abuse us.

I believe the procedure for the mid-term is finally clear. If anyone would like to discuss how they could better prepare, with me or in groups during class, let's do it.

Regular attendance is still expected because of the experience-based nature of the course. I'd like to suggest a structure that might facilitate fulfilling the term paper requirement and allow us to break into interest groups to work together on class subjects for presentation. The small groups will give us an opportunity for planning and working together in chosen areas. The topics for group work are open although I'd like us to try to cover the rest of the content areas in our text-

The suggestion of forming sub-groups had been made by students before, but I had not picked it up. I still presented it as my suggestion although I paid lip service to the students who had really pushed the idea. I must have felt pretty insecure at this point to do that.

When I finished my speech I felt like I had run a thrity-mile race. I was exhausted but also relieved and intuitively confident that the rough roads appeared to be over and things would get better. They did!

Wednesday, July 22

Subgroups again. People seem happier now that content is coming out. Gathered together for wrap-up. Groups all cooperating, and seem to be eager and excited about their own small group's project. We needed to pick a moderator for tomorrow. Mark asked Joel to be moderator. Joel asked if someone else would take the role, but Mark said that as a member of the group he should accept the responsibility. Joel gave us a bibliography of readings and mimeographed copy of test.

I was blind to the students' just wanting me to perform as a member rather than as an authority. I didn't see that they were no longer in danger of becoming overly dependent on me and that they just wanted me to participate more.

Thursday, July 23

Class started without Joel. Anne, Bobby, Jim, Joan, Pattie and a few others went to a model school yesterday. The class was interested to see what it was all about. Matthew had been there before and was basically opposed to the idea. Pattie was harmonizing, try-

ing to get at both points of view. Discussion concerned the freedom of this type of school, or how freedom affects the amount and quality of learning. Joel took over task of moderating, asked for fishbowl of one member from each sub-group to see what they are doing. Mark and Tom are at odds. This seems to be concerned with competition between small groups which is a real factor even though the cause for their discussion turned out to be a misunderstanding.

The groups formed according to general interests related to the course and textbook content. Breaking up into sub-groups offered a badly-needed outlet for common work on special interests. The common experience was useful even though there was some hard feeling when a few people felt rejected by a sub-group.

Friday, July 24

Test for me--I don't know what went on in group that didn't take test today.

While half the group wrote the in-class exam, the other half discussed their anticipated inability to answer the question in the seventy-five minutes allotted. The question was essentially that they write about their learnings and goals in the educational psych. course, that they give themselves a midterm grade and justify it.

Few responded in class to the question of how they could help each other prepare for the exam. Tests and grades still had such importance for them, that after discussing them for almost two weeks, some still panicked at the last minute. A few even stayed up better than anything, the enormous emphasis students put on grades and tests. As Carl Rogers has suggested, emphasis on evaluation has created an educational environment contrary to that suggested by our theories of learning.*

E. SHIFT IN FOCUS FROM PROCESS TO CONTENT

The mid-term crisis was over at last and we all looked with relief to the prospect of greater direction in the course. We planned to carry through with our idea of preparing and delivering presentations in small groups. By this plan, we hoped to focus on content areas of interest and to experiment with different teaching styles.

The decision to break into interest groups marked a turning point in the group's development. Previously, we'd focused more on ourselves and how we related to each other. It may be that I spent too much time early in the course on issues of freedom and control, leadership, and expectations. I don't think the time was wasted because in dealing with our anxieties and struggling through our confusions together, we learned basic educational issues from our first-hand experiences. During this second half of the course, sub-groups of students and the class as a whole were enthusiastic in pursuing their interests. It's difficult to predict if this would have occurred without the previous experiences.

*W. Bennis, Interpersonal Dynamics, New York: Basic Books, 1968, pp. 687-703.

Monday, July 27

A fairly small number of people had discussion. People who ordinarily don't say much are talking. Kathy is able to see changes in group feeling now that people are not "attacking" but willing to accept differences.

Tuesday, July 28

Force-field analysis* to see if we can find out why some people don't participate. Discussion of this. Groups then divided--some to discuss model school or to discuss evaluation, some to hear what Debby B. had to say.** Matthew wants to take ballot of how many people want a lecture class. He wants to carry this on even though the group is not very interested.

*Force-field analysis is a method of solving problems by analyzing the component forces helping and blocking change in some area. The method originated with Kurt Lewin, a social psychologist. See the description of the procedure on p. 62 of Fred's section.

**Debby B. is an innovative elementary teacher whom a class member invited to talk with us.

AWARENESS OF CLASS FACTIONS

Class participation was a greater problem for the active members of the class than for the more silent members. The talkers admitted in the discussion that they often worried about what the silent members thought of them. Besides the active and more passive sub-groups within the class, we became aware of other sub-groups--those headed for elementary teaching and those headed for the high school and finally those who wanted more leadership from me, the teacher, and those who wanted to try being more self-directive as a group.

Wednesday, July 29

Before class started Mark and Anne moved Joel's belongings into the middle of the circle while he was out of the room. He took it very well and moved to edge of circle. Then he took the reins to discuss exam--asked opinions, told his reactions. People were supporting, harmonizing for the most part. I see some cliques developing.

JOKE ON THE TEACHER

I was admittedly surprised to find my things moved to the center of the circle. In this situation some of my teachers would have made a scene and demanded knowing who had played this trick. Although I guess I could

have asked the class if they were trying to tell me something I just told the students, I didn't want to sit there because my back was facing half the class and I couldn't see those behind me. Sitting in the center also conflicted with my personal philosophy of teaching.

I believe in the value of a student-centered class in contrast to the more traditional teacher-centered or expert focus. That is why the difference between the new and old classrooms was important to me. When you're out of the limelight and someone else is moderating the discussion, it's nice to be able to relax and see what's happening from a different perspective. (When we're not wrapped up in giving a presentation to a class, it's easier to think of omissions and to be aware of student reactions.)

Thursday, July 30

Tom begins the class by reading his ideas concerning a moderator. Matthew has a lot to say. Joan sees Bobby as a mover and a talker. Vie says fear keeps her from talking because of dominant personalities who have or might put her down. Nancy is supporting her. Jim is disagreeing--he feels comfortable. The group is doing their own evaluating without it being suggested by Joel. Several non-participators take the opportunity to explain why they are not talking. This seemed to make the rest of the class feel more secure. But there is quite a lot of pressure lately on non-participators to conform to norms group has established--or that vocal members have established. Cindy was able to say her negative feelings in terms of this group. Nancy is supporting her statements as to not enough content. At the end of the class Joel spoke up--very agitated in response to several people saying that the most valuable thing about the course has been learning group dynamics. He said this is not a course in group dynamics--it is Ed. Psych. and if the group is not getting this, it is the group's fault. Pattie said, "This is the first time you've lost your cool!"

Since my specialty was group dynamics and the students had little acquaintance with this field, why did I lose my cool when group dynamics was the name they gave to the course? I was clearly sensitive to the relatively small amount of attention given to academic content in the course. I was having some last minute doubts that while trying to demonstrate the importance of group dynamics to education and teaching, I had gone somewhat overboard. At least the way students characterized the course, it indicated they had learned something from me.

I'm really glad that I "lost my cool," however. At last I was able to show some anger. I usually keep it in. I believe it is healthier for teachers to share both negative and positive emotions with their class so they can be honest and can be seen as real people.

I know I am somewhat inhibited about expressing my negative feelings, especially when I'm new to people. When I am teaching or leading a group I sometimes fool myself by believing I'm concerned about not scaring others by my anger. Actually I'm just afraid of anger although reading Bach's The Intimate Enemy (see bibliography) has helped me accept anger and fighting as natural. It isn't realistic or healthy for teachers to attempt to model perfect containment of feelings when the students can see their feelings written all over their faces. I think we hope that if we don't talk about our feelings, they'll go away. That's not the way it happens with me nor, I suspect, with anyone else.

Friday, July 31

Small groups met to prepare their presentations on one of the content areas of the course. (During small group meetings, Joel was available to meet with individual students or their sub-groups.)

Monday, August 3

Joel took charge to get agenda decided. Group decided to divide into small groups and then for the last 20 minutes anyone interested could come and join Joel for (multiple) role-conflict exercise.

My wife Susie and I were going into town after class so, after hesitating, I invited her to attend class with me. I believed that her presence in class would help the students see me as a person rather than as a detached professional. It's possible that in choosing this day to take charge of the class agenda, I may have been showing off for my wife, even though the thought of showing off had occurred to me earlier.

Mat gave a solo presentation about a Red Cross course. Some stayed for his presentation while others went to a meeting of their ongoing sub-group. Of course, there were divided loyalties when students had to choose which group to join. This experience of choosing or personal decision-making is often lacking in traditional classrooms.

For the last twenty minutes half the class took part in my demonstration of the (multiple) role-conflict exercise.

MULTIPLE ROLE OR ROLE CONFLICT EXERCISE*

This P.S.L.E. consists of posting groups of four or five signs in different parts of the room. Each sign is of a different role that pertains to some members of the group (for example: parent, daughter-son, teacher, citizen, and husband-wife).

Participants are asked to go to the sign representing the most important of the five roles, functions, or positions. They must choose that which represents their primary role obligation. Those who aren't able to go to one position are told they may use the center of the room. After people position themselves physically where they feel most comfortable they are asked to discuss with others near them why they chose that position and the conflict or tensions they experienced.

The act of moving to a position is a form of public commitment which has been found to be effective in clarifying the many divisions or conflicts within a person or a group. A modification of this procedure is to suggest that people separate by their beliefs or opinions on any issue. This allows those of like mind to pool their resources, formulate their position and arguments, and then either to debate the issue with the other group or to accept the differences between groups as they are. If toleration or acceptance of differing opinions is the goal, then emphasis should be placed on there being no right answers, just different viewpoints.**

Tuesday, August 4

(No entries on the activities of this day were made.)

Wednesday, August 5

Sub-group gave presentation on exceptional child. Used modified fishbowl, sitting interspersed among us. People felt free to participate. Much content. Low key. Joel seems to have achieved something--it looks as if the comfortable atmosphere is such that those who wish can participate and express divergent opinions. During evaluation Joel said he felt lost at times because he was unsure of structure of presentation. Most people disagreed. Interesting switch.

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*I believe this exercise originated with the staff and participants of a two-week community development lab run by the Boston University Human Relations Center. At the lab I also met staff of the B.U. Leadership Consulting Service who later became my close friends and colleagues. I owe many thrilling learning experiences to the staff and members of these two organizations in the three years we worked and studied and taught and played together while learning from each other.

**See other P.S.L.E.'s on group and interpersonal

I'm often misunderstood to be saying that no structure is good. Near the end of a class or program some people often feel I've pulled a switch on them when I suggest a structure. I must not be communicating well, or else people hear things differently from what I think I'm saying. Life would be simpler if feelings, biases, and prejudices didn't influence the sending and receiving of messages, but life is not simple I guess.*

My mother was coming to see a friend deliver a lecture at the college so I invited her to visit Wednesday's class. Many of the students enjoyed meeting her. It was important for her to see one of her sons at work, since my Dad had been buried only three months earlier. We were all glad she had come, although I must admit to worrying beforehand about the students' reactions.

Thursday, August 6

Sub-group presented role-playing in terms of creativity in its large sense being the ideal learning. Frank as lecturer. The point seemed to be gotten across. Class enjoyed it. Mr. Mann (a local principal) then spoke in informal discussion. Matthew jumped up to introduce him--very directive, asked us to move into circle and started to talk before we were all seated. Once in the circle very fruitful discussion--class interest high. Mr. Mann had many good things to say about how we seem to be working as a group. His compliments to "our group" made people feel good.

ROLE PLAYING

Frank's protrayal of an authoritarian lecturer was an extreme stereotype but fun. Reversing roles so that people experience being a teacher or a student or principal or teacher is usually useful. This acting is followed by a discussion of how people felt in each role.

Mr. Mann, a principal, had come at the invitation of a class member to talk with us about his criteria for hiring or working with teachers. It was important to many of us to hear a principal support the things we were doing and learning.

Friday, August 7

Jim's group gave their presentation. Pattie asked for 10 minutes to do her thing--acting devil's advocate in terms of traditional teaching. Open discussion. A visitor from the night class is very involved. Jim's group explained why they couldn't give what they started out to do and explained their insights into why they failed in the task. Interesting to see that small group is not necessarily the answer to keep blocking from occurring--size is not the only significant factor. There seems to be some feeling of certain students that this group is making itself special and "elite" by what

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*See other P.S.L.E.'s on problems of communi-

they have done--a feeling you led us to expect so much--you were so excited and mysterious. Now you tell us you failed but you're still keeping the reasons mysterious. Joel told group the final was ready, it would be a take-home, it would be due Tuesday--didn't ask for our opinions and no one minded.

F. LAST WEEK

After August 7, Aurelie stopped writing her diary so I'll have to reconstruct the last week from my own notes and recollections.

I asked students to make carbon copies of their exams and papers in which they reported what they learned from their projects or sub-group activities. In this way I could read the students' work at my leisure. I enjoyed the papers I had time to read. Since grades were due the last day of the summer session, most of the faculty had to stay up all night grading papers. I doubt that any faculty member could appreciate any student's paper when rushed to make grades for thirty to eighty-five students in one night.

Lucky thing my students graded their own final exams. The exam was of the take-home variety and was due at least three days before the end of the course. This allowed students time to seek comments from others as well as me and to evaluate their own work. I read all papers and commented briefly, but time was too short for me to determine grades fairly and I preferred that students grade themselves anyway. Only a few students refused to grade themselves, although many resisted for a while, saying it was difficult. All students gave themselves A's and B's except one who gave judgment. Some of the more modest students or those who were hard on themselves appeared upset when they heard how many people gave themselves A's. They seemed to get over it quickly, however. Many excused themselves for taking grades so seriously by talking of the pressures of the real world--getting jobs, references, and so on.

I had hoped to spend the whole last week in evaluating, reviewing, summarizing, and discussing applications of the learnings and experiences we shared together. But the time got whittled away by student presentations, a few P.S.L.E.'s and lecturers I presented to the group, and a movie on an experimental school. I was a little too timid in not fighting for more time for evaluation. I probably was wondering how we could bring closure to this experience which was complicated for us all.

BLIND MAN'S
WALK-
HELPING
STYLES

One of the P.S.L.E.'s we did is called "blindman's walk." Students paired off; one student closed her eyes and her partner led her around the chairs and other obstacles in the room. This demonstrated different helping styles--whether people gave too much or too little assistance. It also gave people insights as to how they felt being both dependent and directive. I saved this group exercise until the end of the course to avoid making some people unnecessarily resistant or uncomfortable. At this final stage in the group's development the trust level was high and most people enjoyed

game. In using P.S.L.E.'s a sense of timing is crucial. It's important to evaluate what a group wants and is ready for so that it isn't pushed too far too soon.*

I suggested this exercise at this time to explore what it means to be helpful to discover the effects of directiveness and to emphasize the relevance of helping for teachers. I was also trying to draw the analogy between what I had done in the course and my own helping style. Although I am usually protective of others and afraid of hurting anyone, I didn't think it was desirable to coddle my students in this course or to respond to all of their requests even if I was able to do so.

We didn't have enough time for formal evaluation of the course but we did review our different learnings. We discussed what we learned about leadership styles, the pros and cons of sub-grouping or staying together, and many of the other procedures we experimented with. We discovered that we can learn from both failures and successes if we develop trust in others and don't get defensive about our blunders. Most importantly we experienced an authentic human encounter between teacher and students. Yes, I guess it's obvious that I was pleased about much of what happened even with the mistakes we made.

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*Marvin Rosenblum describes the use of encounter groups in teacher education in another booklet by the Pilot Communities Program entitled THE OPEN TEACHER. Although he moves much faster in using P.S.L.E.'s and confrontation, the group quickly offers support to individuals while they take the risks involved in growing and changing.

People tell me that I am usually self-critical and don't let myself enjoy my successes enough. This time, however, I'm going to conclude this description of my class on a positive note and do what many of us don't do enough of--brag. I'll do it as a P.S.L.E. like the ones Fred and I develop for classes we lead.

BRAGGING

In the Bragging Exercise, I stand up and tell people what I'm good at and why I like myself and invite others to do the same. In this procedure we usually discover how hard we are on ourselves and that we focus more on our problems than on our strengths. Other members of the group usually help us to get started or fill in our blind spots by sharing strengths they see of which we ourselves are unaware.

Now to brag about (1) the student-teacher interaction, (2) the course content and process and (3) me as teacher.

1. Student-teacher interaction: I was pleased about my ability to communicate with my students and to develop enough trust and acceptance so they and I could share in a meaningful learning experience.

I feel good about so many students coming early and staying late after class to discuss class issues. A group of students and I even got together a few times after the course was over to continue what was started in this course. The personal relationships that developed were and still are valuable.

2. The course content and process: We may not have covered as many informational points as some other courses, but more important to me, we lived and practiced and tested the principles, values and issues we were discussing and learning about. This made the learning qualitatively more intense, involving, and probably longer lasting than the memorization of less meaningful facts or information.

3. Me as Teacher: Most of all, I'm proud of the way I persisted in my values and principles in the face of many lonely days of turmoil and self-doubt. I did what I believed in and saw it succeed. And now I'm taking the risk of criticism in writing this personal account of what was done, how I felt, and what my students and I experienced and learned. While teaching and writing I've learned more about myself, my ambivalences about taking leadership and responsibility, expressing my honest reactions, and how I avoid anger and critical comments.

G. EVALUATION

That at least is my most rosy view of my first teaching experience. But the final judgment about the value of a course must be left to the students whom I see as our clients in school. Six months after the class ended, I sent all my students, from both day and night classes, a follow-up questionnaire to determine if there was any transfer of effects from our class to other situations. This note accompanied the evaluation form:

> Dear Friends:
>
> I hope all is going well. As part of my work at EDC I've decided to write up my perceptions of what happened in our class this summer and the roles we all played for each other. I'd appreciate your opinions and additions to what I write. Before I send it to you I would like your responses to the following questions just to do the follow-up I threatened you with this summer. If the promise of sending you my description of our class isn't enough to motivate you, how about if I ask nicely and say please? It really is important that we discover the duration and effects of this type of course.
>
> Cordially,
>
> Joel Perlmutter

Follow-Up Questionnaire On Ed. Psych. Course

1. What were the most significant learnings you remember, if any, from our summer class in Ed. Psych?

2. Do you remember what prompted these significant learnings; personal discussion, contemplation, group exercises, reading, etc?

3. At this point in time how do you feel about what happened and how useful was it to you after the class and now in your teaching, learning, and life?

4. Would you be interested in attending a follow-up workshop in April or May on the possible roles of teachers and students and the problems and joys of performing them?

5. Other comments and news.

I was dissappointed that only one-half my day students and one-eighth of my evening students responded. This forced me to recognize that the class was over and we'd gotten involved in new pursuits. The following quotations were selected as representative from those who responded. Others we didn't hear from may have been somewhat less positive.

Students' Evaluations Six Months Later

Group Discussions Large and Small

I think the most important learning for me was the group discussions both large and small. The large discussion groups showed how bogged down people can become when there are many ideas but only a limited amount of time and alternatives available. The arguments in the larger group helped me to think about groups in terms of personal conflict and the desire for leadership. It seemed that there were too many people who wanted to be heard and too little direction available. In the end this seemed to make us want to succeed in small groups and I think we did. For me, personal experience was the best teacher.

Confused

This course was not at all as I had expected. We always seemed to be a bit confused and the reason may be that we never stuck to one subject long enough to get anything resolved. Actually what I remember most about the course was the practical "in classroom" advice I received from the people already teaching in the classes.

Just Credit

Well I must honestly say until recently I thought the course was just one more credit and a course I would have to take to teach. Since then I've taken two more psychology courses: Human Relations and Developmental Psychology and Sociology. It has not only

changed my attitude but my future possibly. I now wish to major in psychology and I hope eventually to teach or be a guidance counselor. What I find is useful and can apply to cases now.

Road Map for a New Career

Since the course helped me to develop a road map for a new career, it was perhaps the most important learning experience I have been involved in. I am still reviewing my notes from time to time so the experience is still extremely relevant to me.

Living Democracy

What happened was revolutionary for me, as I was used to a traditional learning setting with teacher as task master and judge of achievement. "Useful" isn't the word! It is a guideline that makes all the ideals I've been brought up with jell together, and now I feel I can help other children, as well as my own, really live what democracy is supposed to be.

A Plus and a Minus

I am trying to be sensitive to my students. I employ little discipline--class socialization "controls" my classes--this is both a plus and a minus to all parties concerned. However, I find that people are sensitive to subject matter, to self and to others if only the right "climate" is present. My students ask for extra work without credit once they grasp the value of how it can strengthen them as individuals. (I teach Social Sciences.)

Springboard to More Learning

I didn't enjoy every minute of the course--in retrospect I think the reason for this was two-fold. Firstly, I didn't trust what I heard--other teachers had started out in a similar vein but never followed through. Secondly, when one is used to pre-set structure the removal of it brings on insecurity. However, since the course acted as a springboard to so much more learning for me, I would say it was highly successful!

More Relevant to Life

The course was much more useful in "life" than in teaching. It has made me more tolerant of students who won't stand for anything but teacher-directed stuff. I understand better how far they have to go, the necessity of them finally getting there, and the long, gradual process necessary to bring them to any significant self-learning responsibility.

Best Part Were the Exercises

Group exercises and discussion were the most enjoyable and educational part of the class for me at least. I feel I learned so much about people and getting along with others. I think I acutally got rid of some weighty old prejudices about people who do not think exactly like I do. I'm a better person for the experience; that much I'm sure of.

Content or Process?

I got to thinking of some of the comments I heard from some of the class--that they weren't learning

tional psychology. It seems to me that this class had the whole thing about the psychology of education--the text you chose and the approach you took as teacher, the discussion-type atmosphere--made it possible for us to see the dynamics of a group in a learning situation. We were allowed to spend as much time as we wished finding out how we felt as students--how you felt as the teacher--and had a good text so that we had some vocabulary we could share and understand what we were saying to each other.

Non-Summary

Just as I believe my class benefited by searching for their own answers and reactions to our class, I believe this is true for you the reader also. Even if I could have wrapped up all our experiences in a neat little summary I doubt the value of doing that for you. Its effect would be to give only my summary which could be ignored, memorized and repeated, or filed away. The individual questioning, searching, and self-discovery process forces one to formulate his own reactions or conclusions and to become self-reliant rather than dependent on others. As you probably are already aware, I believe it's belittling to tell someone what he should and should not bother learning or feeling.

My goal in writing as well as in teaching is not to manipulate you or others to believe exactly what I do. I prefer to create conditions where others may evaluate their own opinions, while accepting others' need to think, feel or act differently. I accept the desirability of others teaching and learning in their own ways. I hope what I described here will serve to stimulate others to experiment with the

teaching styles rather than to imitate (or reject) mine. If we can increase the possibilities of choice and help people cope with making decisions, our educational systems will release rather than repress the creative potential of our children.

H. TRANSFER OR WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

And so I leave you to draw your own conclusions about me, my teaching and the usefulness of some of the procedures I employed in my class. How do you feel at this point?

We asked one hundred teachers for their reactions to a prototype of this book and found that there were those who felt excited, confused, interested, impressed, bored, amused and even indignant.

If you liked the first-person style of this section, you'll probably also appreciate the next section where Steve Jantzen, our editor, elaborates on the basic values and concepts which underlie my teaching and the workshops and exercises which Fred describes in his portion of the book.

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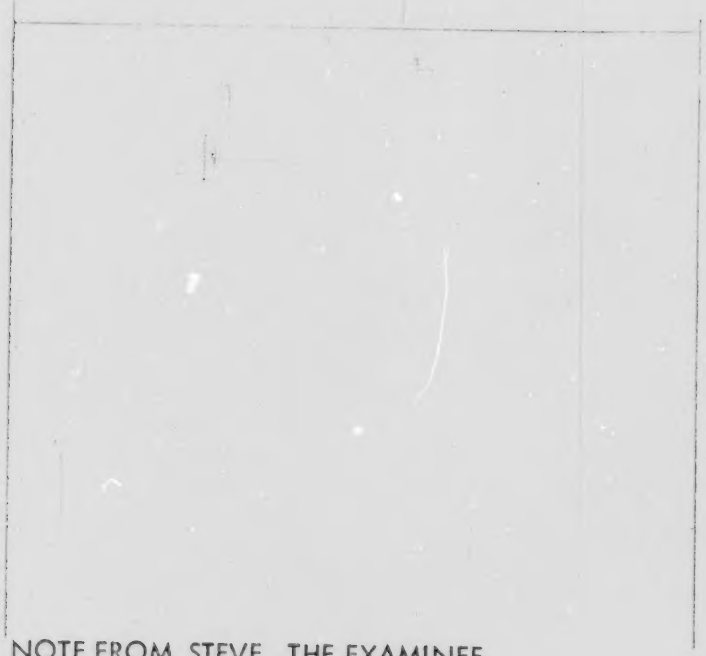

NOTE FROM STEVE, THE EXAMINEE

In the first or second draft of this book, Joel wanted a glossary of terms to supplement the description of his class. But because I don't like glossaries, and even more important, because I often feel an urge to write instead of edit, I proposed a scheme for handling the glossary in an unusual way. I would define the terms myself, I suggested, as if I were taking a mid-term exam in a course in interpersonal relations. Joel, acting in the role of teacher, would present the terms to me as identification questions and then comment on my definitions.

It was easy to justify this procedure in terms of the process orientation of this book. Three arguments came to

First, the exam would be an exercise in itself, right in keeping with the other exercises in the book.

Second, the exam would force the expert on human relations (Joel) to step down from his lonely podium and allow me, the learner, a prominent part in his book. This seemed consistent with Joel's efforts to avoid playing the single authority--the man with all the answers.

Third, the definitions resulting from this process would not appear fixed and frozen. They wouldn't pretend to be the last word. Instead, they might induce the reader to enter into the dialogue with remarks and criticisms of his own.

Joel accepted the idea and presented me with a list of twenty-one terms, which I hastened to define. He then added his "teachers" comments to my "test answers."

What follows is Joel's analysis of what happened between us in our assumed roles of teacher and student.

THE TESTING PROCESS (by Joel)

As you will see, it's not so easy to change the way we relate to each other even when we recognize the need for doing so. Writing this section helped Steve and I become more aware of our natural relationships and of the special dynamics of the student-teacher relationship.

While taking the test, Steve found that by searching for examples he discovered the application of the terms to his own life. When he was finished, I jokingly suggested that he had learned a lot by doing the "exercise"

would impress him with the importance of self-evaluation so that he wouldn't just be looking for my approval. Try this sometime if you want to see how important your opinion has become to students and how little they depend on self-evaluation.

When I did read Steve's explanations of terms, I found myself getting carried away at times with additions and corrections. I felt that, as the teacher, I had to find something to add, because I was supposed to know more than the student. Have you ever flexed your muscles with your students as I did?

Do we really want kids to believe that we as teachers always know more or don't make mistakes? We might say, "I don't know," or "help me," more often than we do, as teachers. My fifteen year old sister-in-law was telling me recently of her joy at correcting her teacher who made a mistake on the blackboard. It's sad that kids and teachers appear to be in battles of mutual criticism rather than on a team of mutual support.

Although I believe teachers should make their knowledge available and that we have needs to feel smarter and more important to kids, this tendency to correct and add to everything that kids say and write can be harmful. I'll never forget my anger toward a teacher who required me to rewrite a whole paper because of a few misspellings, or inconsequential errings from "acceptable form." By being so picayune, aren't we really telling students not to bother to do anything if it isn't perfect?

As a teacher, I believe I have succeeded if I can help my students come up with their own answers, rather than having them depend on me or other adults. I obviously haven't perfected this skill yet but I think by being aware of our needs and the effects of our actions in the classroom, we can continue to grow both as teachers and people.

Question #1:

Define OBSERVE (See, Listen)

Student's Answer: This one is so easy, it's hard. To observe is to watch carefully. In the context of the classroom, it's to watch carefully the interaction between students and teacher. My aim in observing is to see what really is happening between people not just to notice what appears to be happening superficially. The greatest barrier to careful watching is the temptation to jump into the event myself--to join in the argument, to volunteer to mediate and so on. It is important to be aloof and detached if I'm going to observe objectively. But doesn't this contradict another cardinal principle which I'll define later--one should share feelings? How can I share feelings and observe at the same time?

Teacher's Comments: It is impossible to do all the "cardinal principles" listed in the glossary at once. Usually it's best to isolate one task or issue at a time to explore its importance. But it is possible to observe and participate simultaneously.

We may be somewhat more objective when we are non-participants. But there are also advantages to being a participant-observer. For example: the group is more likely to trust an active, equal member; the participant-observer makes available to the group more of his skills and resources than just observation; and the observer as participant can test certain hunches by initiating activities rather than waiting for others to do it for him.

(Steve, I find that I'm not evaluating your statement so much as I'm using it as a jumping-off point to elaborate on your answers.)

The Process Analyzed

In beginning his answer with "it's hard," Steve was probably covering himself in case he had problems or in case I evaluated his reply as poorly done. He then defined the term using "To observe is to..." and "the greatest barrier..." Here he seems pretty confident of himself. His questions near the end ("doesn't this?..." and "How can I?...") may pose a true dilemma for him or it could also be a coy way of searching for and challenging my internal inconsistencies.

In the teacher's comments my use of "it's best to..." and "it is and is not possible to..." could be taken as put-downs. In my second paragraph I discuss the advantages of each but don't really answer Steve's question about how to both observe and share feelings at the same time. We teachers don't often let the students get away with not answering our exact questions. Maybe at times we don't answer the students' questions, or aren't even aware of it because students seldom are comfortable confronting teachers on their evasions.

Teachers will either have to watch themselves or invite their students to keep them responsive. I begin to be aware of what I'm doing by my last sentence where I recognize how I am using Steve rather than responding to him.

Question #2

Define LISTEN (Hear, Empathize)

Student's Answer: I don't think of myself as a good listener. But that's okay because the people who can really listen are maybe one in a hundred, maybe one in a thousand. To be a good listener I would check my natural impulses to think along my own wave length and try to tune in to the wave length of the other person. I would concentrate all my energy on picking up not only the verbal message my companion is sending but also the emotional energy behind it. I would speak only as a way of leading him on to say more. I would want to understand the nature of his thoughts more than I'd want him to understand the nature of my own thoughts.

Supposing, Joel, you explode when you read this exam. Anyone's natural tendency would be to defend himself. But if I were a good listener, I'd try to understand where your anger is coming from and I'd encourage you to continue with your tirade hoping to learn something about you. Writing these words, I'm almost anxious for you to explode, to see whether I actually could be the good listener that I idealize here. Please take this as an invitation.

Teacher's Comments: I'd be glad to explode for you, Steve, when I feel like I've got something to blow up about. The only trouble with your example is that it neglects two important points. First, when people are angry or extremely emotional, they are often illogical and not even understandable to themselves. Secondly, the discipline involved in forcing oneself to listen to another is hard enough when we care about what others are saying. But when it appears irrational and critical of us, we often want to tune out rather than tune in. I'd say a better example would be this: try to understand someone with an opinion different from yours so you can more effectively evaluate his arguments.

The Process Analyzed

Steve's suggestion requires objectivity to an extent that is almost unreal. In his hypothetical situation the teacher is uncontrollably angered and he, the student, is the model of restraint.

In my reply I become somewhat patronizing ("only trouble with your example") and then I flex the muscle of my position and experience by saying "a better example would be..."

Question #3

Define SELF-DISCLOSURE (Revealing, Sharing)

Student's Answer: Letting someone know things about myself. Important things. What things trouble me. What things excite and interest me. What things leave me cold. I often feel more comfortable with books than I do with people. That's an example of self-disclosure on my own part. I enjoy the study of Shakespeare. I feel ashamed of the desperate things I do when playing basketball. I feel anxious about my work. Telling people about this type of thing is what I think you mean by self-disclosure. I'm less sure I understand the uses of self-disclosure. Is it wise to let strangers know about intimate personal affairs? Is it proper for teachers to encourage kids to make disclosures of a personal and intimate nature?

Teacher's Comments: Under supportive conditions when the class cares about its members, people usually begin with easier things and test others' reactions to see if they'll make fun of them or reject them.
The uses of self-disclosure are to share a part of yourself, inviting others to do likewise in order to get to know others, and to better understand yourself. Another effect is to cut down the amount of phoney game-playing between people. It is also a way for people to buy into a relationship or a group and build trust. Rather than asking students questions it is more natural to share a part of yourself and they then refer to themselves naturally. Self-disclosure is distinguished from confession by not intending to induce guilt feelings but to facilitate getting to know others.

The Process Analyzed

Although I answered Steve's question on the uses of self-disclosure, I didn't say anything about the desirability of self-disclosure in the classroom or the wisdom of telling strangers about intimate personal affairs.

I evaded these questions probably because of some doubts of my own and because I didn't have a clearcut simple answer. Saying, "it depends" could also be an evasion, but if I really went into what it depended upon I would be more honest and respected than if I ignore these very important questions. (See S. Jourard's work* for a more complete treatment of self-disclosure.)

*Jourard, S. The Transparent Self. (1964) and Disclosing Man To Himself. (1968), Princeton, N.J.,

Question #4

Define SHARED RESPONSIBILITY (Mutuality, Collaboration, Democratic Decision-Making)

Student's Answer: A teacher isn't the only one to decide what a student should learn. The student should decide that question for himself. The teacher is present simply to help the student pursue the course of study that interests him.

That sounds very well in theory, Joel, but I doubt that as a teacher of history in the public schools, I could make it work. History is a state requirement. A kid simply can't decide not to study it. In this situation, how can a teacher encourage kids to "share responsibility" for their own learning? Supposing they don't care to learn about the Constitution. Then I would be in a position where I either make them learn and violate my own principles or allow them not to learn and violate the principles of the school. "Shared responsibility" is a nice idea but it doesn't work in practice.

Teacher's Comments: Does a state requirement necessitate all learning in the same way at the same rate of speed, or even in the same class? Some can learn those requirements better from a book while others may want to work at a law office first. Why not?

Shared responsibility is not permissiveness, or lack of requirements and expectation. It is working flexibility and collaboratively within the real requirements and sometimes even questioning the necessity of requirements.

If we make all the decisions for students are we educucating them to be self-sufficient citizens or are we just training them to be obedient automatons, dependent on others for telling them what to do and when and how to lead their lives.

The Process Analyzed

Steve presents good, tough questions, but his conclusion that "it doesn't work in practice" could be seen as a challenge, especially if I weren't too secure and felt threatened. Although I use terms like "collaboration", "mutuality", and "shared responsibility" often, the centrality of power, control and prestige in my written communication with Steve is distrubingly evident (whoever is responsible for it). Steve is right when he says "it doesn't work in practice."

I must have been reacting to a challenge when I reacted with my pompous response and rhetorical question. In my second and third paragraphs I added my trip and went off philosophising and speaking down to Steve as if he were an opponent in a debate match.

The interactions between Steve and myself and my analysis of them don't offer perfect models to follow. Nevertheless, it is hoped that by observing the process of how we teachers relate with students and each other, we can improve our awareness and our way of relating with people. We may even share the responsibility with our students, of helping each other transcend traditional role relations whenever they become dysfunctional to learning. It would be relatively easy for any teacher to try analyzing the interactions he has

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

I still like the idea of having a glossary of "human relations terms" (even if Steve doesn't). The following terms, given in alphabetical order, were Steve's original answers to the exam--minus the teacher's comments which were similar to the above. A single phrase defines each word briefly for easy reference.

CONTRACT

An agreement between two or more people.

When I was a teacher, I told the students, at the beginning of the school year, how I meant to run the course. I asked for questions and comments. There were none. I assumed, therefore, that we then had an agreement or contract and I expected students to live up to that contract for the rest of the year. If they broke it, I got angry. If I broke it they got nervous and confused. It seems unfair to me that students seldom say how they would want a course to be run. The contract between teacher and students thus becomes a one-sided affair.

EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

A set of unspoken beliefs and values associated with learning, teachers, schools, and children.

It's nice to be able to say exactly what I believe. Only when I attempt to formulate my educational philosophy in words, can I really know what it is. Let me see if I can do it in a sentence or two. I don't like school buildings as places to learn. I far prefer museums, libraries, highways, fields, woods, houses, stores, and business offices. I'm learning [illegible]

Communities than I learned as a history student at Princeton University. I enjoy reading good novels for my own enrichment more than for a school assignment. I believe almost everyone thinks the same way. My wife says that the second graders she taught unanimously agreed that their favorite period was recess and she was a good and dedicated teacher just as I was. Think of arrangements whereby kids could be permitted to learn outside the school building and my educational philosophy would be realized.

FEEDBACK

Someone's reaction to what we do or say.

Feedback is what I should want but am usually afraid to ask for. And only by asking for it, am I apt to get it. Feedback comes to me when I ask my wife whether she really likes the tea kettle I bought her for Christmas and when I ask my colleagues what they think of wild ideas like this glossary test. What kind of rewards might come to me as a result of asking for honest and quite possibly negative feedback? I can think of two possible pay-offs. First it's a relief to know that a person's statements about me and my work are truthful. If I know that his compliments are sincere, I feel great. But what if the feedback for what I hear isn't what I hoped for? Anger and resentment might be the first reactions but after that my relationship with an honest "feedbacker" may prosper because he's allowed his true thoughts to show and I've allowed anger to show. The reconciliation afterward makes us both feel better together than if I depended on politeness to maintain good relations. The second [illegible]

try again to revise my work and improve it or, if I as a person am the target, to think about ways to eliminate those habits which make other people uncomfortable in my presence.

FUNCTION OR ROLES

Something we do that carries with it a title and a complex set of social expectations as to how we're supposed to behave.

A teacher acts out different ROLES at different times. When I was a teacher, I started the day as CLERK, taking the attendance. I then jumped into the role of INSTRUCTOR, starting a lesson in American history. Someone threw a pencil across the room and I instantly donned my POLICEMAN's cap. At other points in the day, I would also play at being SOCIAL WORKER, PSYCHOLOGIST, FATHER, CIRCUS PERFORMER, ATHLETE, and so on. The reason I played these roles was because I thought it was expected of me. The principal expected me to keep order so I acted as a POLICEMAN. My liberal principles demanded that I be a SOCIAL WORKER. My training told me I should be an INSTRUCTOR. It is very difficult in this society of ours for anyone including myself to stop playing the many roles people expect of us and to start being OURSELVES. I'm an EDITOR at work, a HUSBAND at home, a SON with my parents, a CHRISTIAN at church. It's really very confusing. (See the role conflict exercise in Joel's part, p. 44.)

GOALS

What we want to do--or be--or become.

Looking back on Joel's narrative description of his class, I liked the procedure of asking students to state their goals for the course. It was a good first step toward individualizing a classroom. However, if students were really honest about their goals they'd have to mention high or passing grades as their foremost concern. I'm therefore inclined to distrust those goal statements from students that omitted all mention of grades. It's part of the game to tell teachers what they want to hear. And a teacher, like anyone else, wants to hear that his specialty interests his audience, and that students want to pursue that specialty because the teacher has fired their imagination. Baloney!

OPENNESS

A willingness to receive; a willingness to let go; and a willingness to explore.

I'm open to suggestions. That, I believe, is the most common usage of openness when applied to people (not doors, manholes, and the like). If I am an "open" per-

son, I listen to other people's opinions, even seek out ideas contrary to my own. At the same time, openness entails willingness to cast off inhibitions in my own speech and actions. I don't suppress an idea for fear someone might not like it but express it freely and seek reaction to it. Thus, as with open doors, open people permit flow in two directions. They permit the entrance of outside ideas and the sharing of their own ideas. How open am I at this point in my life? Not very. But there are days--the good days--I am less afraid to communicate my ideas and feelings to people. On those days too, I'm more willing to listen to others and don't shut them out of my thoughts. I guess then that good listening goes hand in hand with good sharing.

PROCESS

What happens to people as they talk and interact.

This word made no sense to me when I first heard it. Now I consider myself an expert on the distinction between process and content. Writing this exam at this moment is process. When finished, I can mark it content or product. The words I have chosen to use to express myself are the content of the exam. The conversations that went into shaping these words are part of the process. The important part of process so far as learning is concerned is the manner in which each individual child inwardly responds to the lesson. Does he accept or reject it? Understand it or distort it?

You and Fred like to say that process is the HOW of a lesson and content is the WHAT. At first that didn't mean much to me but now I think I understand. And it strikes me as appalling that until now, I've thought only way that the audience (students) automatically understand, accept, and enjoy my writing. But now I see that there are things that affect the reception of my message besides my choice of words. My first impulse when thinking of this gap in my perspective is to blame the schools for emphasizing content, products, words.

SHARING FEELINGS

Something people find difficult to do.

Sharing oneself is the opposite of being aloof. In the classroom, sharing might involve mixing with kids at their seats rather than staying at the blackboard all day. That's one definition. I'm pretty sure it's the wrong one. Let me try again. I've noticed that you and Fred like to use the word "sharing" quite often. It's a speech mannerism with you. Instead of saying, "I want to tell you about an idea," Fred will say "I'd like to share with you some thoughts." I suppose this is to convey an open state of mind as opposed to a dictatorial state of mind. To share is to suggest that I'd like the other person to share in return. To tell is to suggest that the other person accepts my words of wisdom without reply. When a child shares his toys, he allows others to use them; when a person shares his thoughts, he allows others to hear them. I like that analogy.

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LET'S GET IT TOGETHER

EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCES IN HUMAN RELATIONS

by Fred Stokley

WHERE I'M COMING FROM

School and teaching have been a large part of the past thirty-five years of my life. I've been all over the map teaching at educational institutions of various descriptions. I've collected several degrees. I've been a high school teacher and principal, graduate student and professor. All this has led me to here and now as Products Director of the Pilot Communities Program at the Education Development Center. Soon, I will be Superintendent of Schools in Waltham, Massachusetts.

Like all of us I move between depression and joy, optimism and pessimism. There are times when the pressure gets so bad that lobster fishing and potato farming look great. But usually my bias is positive. I'm hopeful about the future.

I'm hopeful especially about my own personal growth and the personal growth of others. I want schools, teachers and parents to allow children to grow. Now and in the past my

CONTENTS

I. Us and Them, Me and You p.14

A. Us and Them

B. Us

C. Me and You

D. Me

II. I Lead Workshops p.67

A. Me and the Resource Team

B. Psycho-Social Learning Experiences

III. Evaluation of Psycho-Social Learning Experiences p.76

I. US AND THEM, ME AND YOU

This part of the book attempts to demonstrate the usefulness of a series of structured experiences (called psycho-social learning experiences) in teacher training workshops.

It was written to introduce teachers and administrators to the techniques employed by staff development consultants in pre-service and in-service training programs. Those who conduct or attend workshops may also learn something new about exercises and their effects.

The P.S.L.E.'S contained in Section I have been used several times in various settings with considerable success. But every group reacts in a different way. P.S.L.E.'s therefore should be used by teachers in a workshop setting only where behavioral scientists trained in the use of group exercises are available to handle all the possible outcomes. They should not be used by an inexperienced person who reads a description of a P.S.L.E., carries it out with the group and expects some specific, predetermined result. In no sense is the unrestricted and uninformed use of P.S.L.E.'s suggested. Section I, entitled "Us and Them, You and Me" consists of four sub-sections. The sequence of the sub-sections from issues between groups (Us and Them) to issues within the individual (Me) follows the logical shift in focus, experienced in most staff development workshops. Usually, discussion in a workshop begins with teachers talking about kids, administrators, parents and issues commonly found "out there" away from the workshop setting. The focus then gradually shifts to the "here and now" of the workshop. The evolution of workshops (and the ordering of Section I) moves from the group level of "Us" to the interpersonal level of "Me and You." Participants begin to become more aware of the process taking place in the group and start to deal with each other in a more open way. Finally members begin to see that learning and change begin with "me." I have most control and influence over myself, less over another, much less over a group, and practically none over a complex bureaucracy.

Each of the four sub-sections is further divided into four topics or themes which also correspond to the evolution of issues often found in workshops. Usually, the group experiences a conflict or a crisis situation of some kind. This is followed by some problem solving attempt calling for leadership. Often those involved in this process experience some change in how they view themselves and others and realize the importance of their self-concept and how it affects their behavior.

The four sub-sections and four themes, joined together, form the matrix or grid shown below:

	US & THEM	US	YOU & ME	ME
CONFLICT	Conflict between Us and Them	Conflict among Us	Conflict between You and Me	Conflict within Me
PROBLEM-SOLVING	Problem-solving between Us and Them	Problem-solving among Us	Problem-solving between You and Me	Problem-solving by Me
LEADERSHIP	Leadership between Us and Them	Leadership among Us	Leadership between You and Me	Leadership by Me
SELF-CONCEPT	Self-concept between Us and Them	Our self-concept	Self-concept between You and Me	My Self-concept

For each of the sixteen boxes in the above grid there is both a corresponding P.S.L.E. and a brief story, dialogue, or theory illustrating a given issue. The stories are true but disguised accounts of the working out of leadership issues, conflicts, problem solving strategies, and self-concept among teachers and administrators who at one time were the clients of the Pilot Communities Program.

Section II is Fred's personal account of his experience leading a workshop for a group of inner-city teacher-advisors.

Section III evaluates the effects of human relations workshops in which P.S.L.E.'s were used.

US
AND
THEM

CONFLICT between: Problem-Solving;

US and Them

Leadership; self-concept...

The case studies and psycho-social learning experiences in this section concern relations between two groups, "our" group and "their" group ("us and them").

CONFLICT BETWEEN US AND THEM

Real-world situation: a conference room
Simulated situation: "The Copier Triangle"

PROBLEM-SOLVING BETWEEN US AND THEM

Real-world situation: a school auditorium
Simulated situation: "The Million Dollar Gift"

LEADERSHIP BETWEEN US AND THEM

Real-world situation: schools
Simulated situation: "The Hollow Square"

SELF-CONCEPT BETWEEN US AND THEM

Real-world situation: a faculty meeting
Simulated situation: "Group Style"

CONFLICT BETWEEN US AND THEM

How do we resolve or manage intergroup conflicts? What strategies do we use and how can we develop a level of tolerance for dealing with conflict?

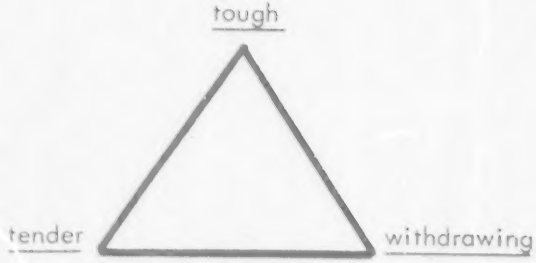
A REAL-WORLD CONFLICT: BETWEEN SCHOOL BOARD AND TEACHERS UNION.

In a small, rural community, the teachers union and the school board were getting nowhere on the question of teachers' salaries. The teachers had refused to renew their contracts before the board agreed on an official procedure for negotiations. The situation seemed hope-

A group process consultant from the Pilot Communities was brought into the dispute to suggest a scheme for improving communication. The day before the union and the board were scheduled to meet for the sixth time, the consultant arranged a preliminary meeting with the teachers. He advised the five union representatives to be themselves and asked five other teachers to role-play the school board. Following his suggestions, five teachers volunteered to role-play members of the school board and to confront the five official spokesman for the teachers' union. The antagonistic parties then reversed roles four times.

The effect this role-playing and role-reversal experience had on the union representatives was striking. It allowed them to "ventilate" much of their anger and hostility, to "get into the shoes" of board members and to receive "feedback" from those teachers watching. At the meeting the next day, the five board members and five teachers were able at last to agree upon a method for reconciliation.

The union representatives testified afterward that the major reason for this breakthrough was the "role-playing-reversal" experience. They stated that when they were meeting with the board they were better able to listen, to empathize, and to respond to board members. It was the first time they had met without anger and personal attacks. Board members agreed that the teacher's new style of behavior influenced them and made their job easier. Both groups felt that more effective communication took place and it was easier for them to work



THE COPING TRIANGLE: A SIMULATED CONFLICT BETWEEN GROUPS IN A WORKSHOP.

In the psycho-social learning experience called "The Coping Triangle" workshop participants discover how they usually respond in conflict situations.

A large group is divided into three subgroups. Group I discusses "the effects of being tough in conflict," Group II, "being tender in conflict," and Group III "withdrawing or denying conflict."

Each group selects a representative. The representatives meet in the center of the [illegible] their respective groups. Each representative reports what he and his group discussed. The representatives do two things: (1) tell the others what it feels like to be tough, tender, or withdrawing in conflict and (2) give feedback to the others about what effect being tough, tender or withdrawing has on us. The discussion is then opened to include the large group which goes through the same two steps. The representatives return to their groups. Each group switches positions: tender becomes tough, tough becomes withdrawn, and withdrawn becomes tender.

This exercise allows group members to examine and, to some extent, feel three modes for dealing with conflict. One conclusion often reached is that we all respond in all three ways. There are occasions when we are inclined to fight, other occasions when we are tender or withdrawing. However, individuals and groups tend to have a bias toward one or the other response. Awareness of this and its effects on others is important.

For example, the event that broke the deadlock between teachers union and school board was the teachers' discovery that the fight strategy they usually used only antagonized the school board and fostered distrust. Their effectiveness was greatly increased when they realized they could also use cooperative strategies to deal with the school board.

PROBLEM-SOLVING: BETWEEN US AND THEM

A REAL-WORLD SITUATION REQUIRING NEGOTIATION BETWEEN TWO GROUPS.

The superintendent of schools of a small, industrial city had invited over one hundred people from one section of the city to attend a one-day conference about a proposal for decentralization. Out of this large group, a steering committee had been formed to broaden the base of community involvement in the decentralization process. The steering committee had called several meetings, the last of which ended in anger and frustration when the community representatives walked out. A group of fifteen people representing the Spanish-speaking community left the meeting in disgust. A student group also walked

The result was open schism. Now two groups met about the decentralization question. There was the original steering committee which had the support of the school administration. It was white, middle class and consisted mainly of teachers. The other group referred to itself as "The People's Committee" and comprised parents, students and community leaders from the black and Spanish-speaking areas.

A consultant from the Pilot Communities Program who had been involved in the decentralization process from the beginning attended the "People's Committee" meeting. He pointed out that the committee had little power to effect substantial change in the school system if they choose to remain outside the system and act as revolutionaires. He suggested they attempt some reconciliation with the original steering committee and remain involved with the process initiated by the superintendent.

In May both groups met in the school board's conference room and accepted the consultant's proposal to form a new committee of eighteen people. People were selected and the resulting committee now represented both of the former groups.

But no sooner was the schism ended than the administration scuttled the entire concept. In June the superintendent resigned. In July the new superintendent decided to divide the city into four parts rather than three. The committee of eighteen formed in May never again met.

Violence may well have been one of the outcomes of

the newly built schools which probably expressed the frustration of the minority groups. They had been led to believe that they could have some real influence in running their schools and then that hope was abruptly withdrawn.

THE MILLION DOLLAR GIFT: A SIMULATED PROBLEM REQUIRING NEGOTIATION BETWEEN GROUPS

In the psycho-social learning experience called "The Million Dollar Gift," three sub-groups try to reach an agreement on a proposal for spending one million dollars.

Each sub-group has fifteen minutes to meet one another and get acquainted so that they can then work together effectively on a common task. They also appoint a spokesman or representative from their group.

Representatives sit in the center of the room facing their respective groups.

The groups pretend that they are from the same school system and a foundation wishes to [illegible] million dollars for a school project. The only condition is that the three groups agree in writing in an hour's time upon what the project should be.

The spokesmen return to their respective groups for fifteen minutes to decide upon a proposal for a project.

Then the three spokesmen meet again in the center facing their groups and in five minutes make their respective proposals.

The task now becomes to merge proposals or accept one. After the exchange of information about proposals spokesmen return to their sub-groups to discuss new ideas and strategies (five minutes). The spokesmen return to the center to attempt to reach some agreement on how to use the one million dollars (five minutes). If the representatives need the time, they meet in the center two more times for five minutes and then return and meet with their sub-groups for five minutes. (The leader may find it useful to point out dysfunctional behavior and suggest alternatives).

The P.S.L.E. terminates when the spokesmen and everyone in all three sub-groups tell what they are feeling to their respective groups and then to the group at large.

Most often with this experience, no agreement is reached and thus the school system or the group does not receive the one million dollars. One reason for this is the human tendency to get "locked in" and hold fast to ideas and proposals. It is difficult to "let go" and collaborate with others even when the prize is one

Issues which usually appear are:

Competition: Are the three groups working together or working in competition with each other? (The three groups tend to compete rather than cooperate.)

Cooperation: Where did cooperation most often occur? (It's often high within each sub-group and low among the three groups.)

Group Pressure: How did the spokesman feel about representing the interests of his group? (The effect on each spokesman, especially when he is in the center facing his group is very strong.)

Delegation: How much power and freedom was given each spokesman, and how did it feel to be represented by another?

Decision-Making: Did the sub-group generate several ideas before selecting one or did it begin with a single idea? Did everyone agree to the decisions made? Who helped influence the decisions of others? How were the decisions made in each sub-group? How were the spokesmen selected? How was the proposal selected?

Participation: Did all have opportunities to participate or were some excluded? Was an effort made to draw people out? Did a few dominate? Who spoke most? Who were involved least?

Leadership: Did a leader emerge? Was the leader designated? Was leadership shared? Was there any structuring of the group? Who were the leaders?

Roles: Who initiated ideas? Were they supported and by whom? Did anyone block? Who helped push for decisions? How did people feel about their role in the group?

Communication: Did people feel free to talk? Was there any interrupting or cutting people off? Did people listen to others? Was there clarification of points made?

Sensitivity: Were members sensitive to the needs and concerns of each other?

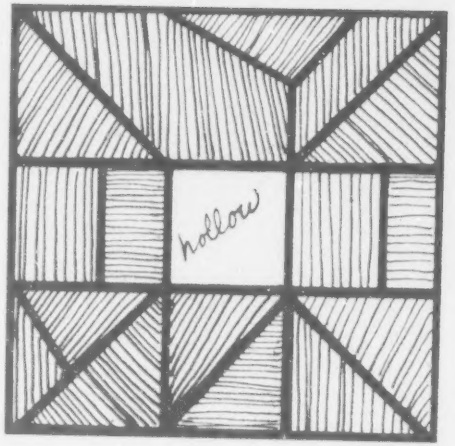
LEADERSHIP BETWEEN
US AND THEM: REAL WORLD INSTANCES OF ONE GROUP LEADING AND INFLUENCING ANOTHER.

Groups influence each other in at least two ways--directly and indirectly.

In Washington, D.C. the Innovation Team of the Cardozo Model School District, a group of teacher advisors, had indirect influence on other innovation teams later formed in the D.C. and Baltimore school systems. The other innovation teams looked upon the Cardozo team as a successful model and imitated its example.

A more subtle example of indirect influence is provided by a group of fifteen teachers who formed a "process team" in rural Maine. After two summers learning skills in human relations and group dynamics they acted as "facilitators" at teacher-committee meetings. They influenced other teacher groups by using strategies for problem-solving and conflict-management learned in the summer workshops. As a group they were a resource to other teacher groups.

Direct influence implies more contact and control of one group by another. In a district of rural Maine, a group of teachers joined parents in working committees to attack various educational problems. The teachers' initiative increased greatly the involvement and commitment of parents to school reform. The same teachers invited their pupils to participate at faculty meetings. The teacher took full responsibility for leading both the parent group and the student group and therefore exerted a direct form of influence.



THE HOLLOW SQUARE: A SIMULATED INSTANCE OF ONE GROUP LEADING AND INFLUENCING ANOTHER.

In the psycho-social learning experience called "The Hollow Square," workshop groups learn that internal communication is crucial to successful performance of a task.

The group is divided into three components. In a group of ten, four members compose the operating team; four members compose the planning team; and two members act as observers. (If the group numbers more than ten there may be more than two observers.) The operating team receives its instruction sheet from the group leader and goes to another room. The planning team receives another instruction sheet and begins to work. Both observers receive their instruction sheets and observe as directed. (See "briefing sheets.")

In the room occupied by the planning team, the sixteen pieces from the hollow square are divided into four piles, one pile for each member of the planning team. The planning team receives a sheet showing how the hollow square looks when assembled. (See diagram).

During the planning period, the observers concentrate on the planning team. During the instruction period, they look at both the planning and operating team. During the assembly period, their focus is on the operating team.

BRIEFING SHEET FOR OPERATING TEAM

You are to carry out a task according to instruction from your planning team. The planning team may call you in for instructions at any time, but if they don't summon you before a stated time, report to them anyway. Your task is scheduled to begin promptly at ___ after which there can be no further instructions from the planning team. You are to finish the assigned task as rapidly as possible.

While waiting for a call from the planning team discuss and make notes on the following:

a. Your feelings and concerns while waiting for instructions for the unknown task.
b. Your suggestions on how a person might prepare to receive instructions.

Your notes will be helpful in the group discussions that follow the completion of your task.

BRIEFING SHEET FOR PLANNING TEAM

Each of you will be given a packet containing cardboard pieces which, when properly assembled, will make a hollow square design.

Your Task

During a period of 45 minutes you are to do the following:

(1) Plan how the 16 pieces distributed among you should be assembled to make the design.

(2) Instruct your operating team on how to implement your plan. (You may begin instructing your operating team at any time during the 45 minute period--but no later than 5 minutes before they are to begin the assembling process.)

General Rules

(1) You must keep all pieces of the puzzle in front of you at all times.

(2) You may not touch or trade pieces with other members of your team during the planning or instructing phase.

(3) You may not show the sheet with the detailed design to the operating team at any time.

(4) You may not assemble the entire square at any time. (This is to be left to your operating team.)

(5) You are not to mark any of the pieces.

(6) Members of your operating team must also observe the above rules until the signal is given to begin the assembling.

(7) When time is called for your operating team to begin assembling, you may make no further communications; simply watch them work.

BRIEFING SHEET FOR OBSERVING TEAM

You will be observing first a planning team as it decides how to assemble sixteen pieces of a puzzle and then as it tries to assemble the puzzle for itself according to instructions from the planning team. The planning team is supplied with the general layout of the pieces. Its job is not to assemble the parts itself but to instruct the operating team on how to assemble the parts in a minimum amount of time. You will be silent observers throughout the process.

Suggestions For Observation

(1) Each member of the observing team should watch the general pattern of communication but give special attention to one member of the planning team during the planning phase and one member of the operating team during the assembling period.

(2) During the planning period watch for:

a. The evenness or unevenness of participation among planning team members.
b. Behavior that blocks or facilitates understanding.
c. How the planning team divides its time between planning and instructing. (How early does it invite the operating team to come in?)
d. How well it plans its procedure for giving instructions to the operating team.

(3) During the instruction period (when planning team instructs operating team) ask yourself:

a. Who in the planning team gives the instructions? How was this decided?
b. How is the operating team oriented to the task?
c. What assumptions made by the planning team are not communicated to the operating team?
d. How full and clear were the instructions?
e. How did members of the operating team react to the instructions?
f. Did the operating team feel free to ask questions of the planners?

(4) During the assembly period (when operating team works alone) watch for:

a. Evidence that instructions were clearly understood or misunderstood.
b. Non-verbal reactions of planning team members as they watch their plans being implemented or distorted.

What Happens:

Ordinarily, neither the planning group nor the operating group, when separated, devote time to building internal collaborative relationships. If neither group is concerned with internal communication and conflict, there is a strong possibility that a conflict or misunderstanding within each group will be transferred to the other group during the instruction stage. If at the end of the forty-five minute period there are unresolved issues within either group and especially within the planning group, they will affect the instruction and implementation stage of the experience. However, if both groups improve internal collaborative relationships, they will have met the basic requirement for inter-group problem-solving and can usually develop and maintain relations and communication.

Teacher-administrator, student-teacher, child-parent, central office-school relations, and inter-departmental conflicts represent separate classes of inter-group relations requiring a somewhat modified approach. In such relations it may be possible for one group, which has itself moved toward collaborative operation, to induce the other group to do so. (For a more detailed description of procedures for improving inter-group relations see R.R. Blake, A.A. Sheppard, and J.S. Mouton, Managing Inter-group Conflict in Industry, Houston, Texas: Gulf, 1964.)

SELF-CONCEPT: BETWEEN US AND THEM
A CHANGE IN SELF-CONCEPT BETWEEN GROUPS IN THE REAL WORLD.

Rosaire Paradis, a potato farmer, lumberman, basketball/baseball coach, and teacher rose slowly from his seat at a faculty meeting in a school in rural Maine.

Rosaire was a member of a group of fifteen teachers who called themselves the "Process Team." The team was supposed to act as group facilitators for the rest of the faculty, but during its year of existence, it had floundered badly. The team wasn't even certain any more about its own purpose.

Three days before Rosaire rose to address his peers at the faculty meeting, he and the others on the team had

Communities Program. The entire team was discouraged and confused. They expressed their concerns in a training exercise (P.S.L.E.) introduced by the consultants and in the next three days experienced four more exercises. At the end of the workshop their outlook had become more optimistic. They wanted to continue as a team concentrating their energies on curriculum development. Their last act was to choose Rosaire Paradis to be their spokesman at the faculty meeting the next day.

Rosaire, rising from his seat, faced the assembled faculty and said in a loud voice:

"Hear me! I am the process team. I'm one year old, healthy, and strong. Last year I got off to a good start, but as the year progressed I regressed. I got caught up with myself and spent entirely too much time in inspecting and examining my own navel. I know many of you who liked me and supported me lost confidence in me and felt I was of little help to you. I'm afraid you had good cause.

"For the past three days I've been involved in something called psycho-social learning. Early in this period I had to make a choice whether to fold up my tent and go away to die or try a come-back. After considerable soul-searching, thought, and discussion, I've decided I've got something to give you and, by God, I'm going to try again.

"For the past two years I've learned a lot about communication and learning. I've learned a lot about myself, for I want to share these learnings and myself with you. I want to help you listen and communicate

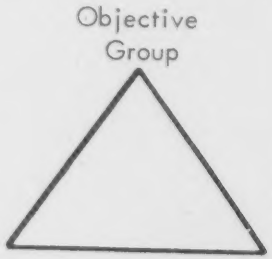
I want to help you not only resolve and manage conflict but use it. I want to aid you when you meet in groups. I want to give you feedback about the process taking place when you meet. In short, I want to be your facilitator."

Rosaire sat down. There was a pause. Then all fifty-five teachers began clapping and shouting: "We want Rosaire! We want Rosaire!"

GROUP STYLE: A CHANGE IN SELF-CONCEPT AMONG GROUPS IN A WORKSHOP.

In the psycho-social learning experience called "Group Style," work groups learn about their image and operating style. The P.S.L.E. is for two groups who have had some past history of working together.

Each participant is given the following diagram:



He places a mark on the diagram which indicates where he thinks his group best belongs. The following chart further defines these terms.

	TOUGH GROUP	FRIENDLY GROUP	OBJECTIVE GROUP
EMOTIONS	Accepts aggression Rejects affection	Accepts affection Rejects aggression	Rejects both affection and interpersonal aggression
GOAL	Dominance	Acceptance	Correctness
JUDGES OTHERS BY	Strength, power	Warmth	Cognitive ability
INFLUENCES OTHERS BY	Direction Intimidation Control of rewards	Offering understanding praise, favors, friendship	Factual data, logical arguments
VALUE IN ORGANIZATION	Initiates, demands disciplines	Supports, harmonizes, relieves tension	Defines, clarifies, gets information, criticizes, tests
OVER-USES	Fight	Kindness	Analysis
BECOMES	Pugnacious	Sloppy sentimental	Pedantic
FEARS	Being "soft" or dependent	Desertion, conflict	Emotions, irrational acts
NEEDS	Warmth, consideration objectivity, humility	Strength, integrity, firmness, self-assertion	Awareness of feeling, ability to love and to fight

Each group determines where, as a group, they feel the mark should be placed on the triangle.

Next, each group "marks" the other group. Where in the triangle do they think the other group belongs? The two groups give each other "feedback" about the markings.

In the course of the exercise, participants learn that friendliness, objectivity and toughness are all traits that can be overdone. The tough group would be more effective if it could be more sensitive at times, accept its dependence on others and come to enjoy consideration for them. It would be more successful if it recognized that some facts will not yield to toughness.

The friendly group would be more effective if it could stand up for its own interests, even against outside pressure. It needs firmness and strength and courage not to evade or to smooth over differences. It must face facts.

An individual in the objective group would be more effective if he could become more aware of the feelings of people both inside and outside his group. He needs to learn that there are times when it is right to fight and times when it is desirable to be affectionate.

These three pure types are, of course, only abstractions. Most groups fall somewhere within the triangle. If it is too far off center, the group should know where to go and what to do to achieve a better balance. It might try strategies and operations opposite to those on which it has often relied.

US

US

US·US·US

CONFLICT among; US

PROBLEM SOLVING;

Leadership;

US·us·

Our SELF-

The case studies and psycho-social learning experiences in this section concern intra-group relations or relations among "us," a group of three or more people.

CONFLICT AMONG US
Real-world situation; a school
Simulated situation; "Group Process Dimensions"

PROBLEM-SOLVING AMONG US
Real-world situation; a workshop
Simulated situation; "The Island"

LEADERSHIP AMONG US
Real-world situation; organizations X and Y
Simulated situation; "Moon Landing"

OUR SELF-CONCEPT
Real-world situation; a school auditorium
Simulated situation; "Sharing Needs and Strengths; "The Red Banana Fish;" "Happy Times"

CONFLICT AMONG US: A REAL-WORLD SITUATION INVOLVING CONFLICT WITHIN THE STAFF OF A SCHOOL.

Mrs. Hadlock seemed the personification of the old-fashioned principal. She had a key for every lock in the school. Except for a small clique of older teachers, the faculty had little contact with her. She was in the process of suing two young teachers who had stirred up trouble with the central administration downtown. In the school as a whole, morale was low. Interpersonal conflict within the teaching staff was widespread. Teachers greeted each other with "Mr." and "Mrs." and parted impersonally in the afternoon.

US

Three group-process leaders had been called into this situation to conduct a two-day workshop in staff de-

formed, one of which included Mrs. Hadlock. As a warm-up exercise Mrs. Hadlock's group played the "No Ball Ball Game." The ball didn't exist, they were told, but they were to pretend that it did and pass it around as if they could change its shape at will. It could float or it could weigh a ton, depending on how the individual imagined it. No one spoke during this non-verbal activity. The leader began the game pretending to inflate a balloon. Others then pantomimed the creation of tennis balls, basketballs, ping pong balls, balls of chewing gum, plastic spheres and giant beach balls. One teacher made a ball with a zipper, climbed inside and encased herself in the ball, and then the group pushed the ball (her) around.

A balloon was formed and deflated by an imaginary pin. Balls were thrown hard and gently. They were floated and rolled on the floor.

When the ball reached Mrs. Hadlock, she showed a side of herself few in her staff had ever seen before. She imagined a basketball and dribbled it around and back. She dribbled it all around the group and put one leg over the ball after the other. The group at first was a little startled and then amused and then happy to see Mrs. Hadlock behaving in a less formal and controlled manner. She seemed to enjoy showing the dramatic side of herself. She mentioned later that as a young teacher she was involved in dramatics and liked acting and performing.

After the No Ball Ballgame, the teachers were more friendly towards one another and were certainly more vocal and spontaneous, more relaxed, more at ease with themselves and the process of the two-day staff

flict between Mrs. Hadlock and one of the young teachers she was suing was almost resolved. The young girl wanted very much to talk to Mrs. Hadlock about the problem. But Mrs. Hadlock refused to discuss it in the group.

Two weeks later the two young teachers and Mrs. Hadlock were reconciled. The "No Ball Ball Game" was a turning point and began the process which led to reconciliation.

However, many of the changes in behavior over the two-day training session were rather superficial and temporary. Mrs. Hadlock still has a key for every lock in the school. The P.S.L.E.'s merely produced an opportunity for the staff of Mrs. Hadlock's school to move one small step toward a better working relationship.

GROUP PROCESS DIMENSIONS:

AN INSTRUMENT FOR MEASURING CONFLICT WITHIN A GROUP (AMONG OTHER THINGS)

The following instrument, used at the end of a meeting, allows members to rate their groups and examine how they function together in accomplishing a task, setting goals, solving problems, making decisions, planning, etc.

Each member rates his group on the eight points and then

GROUP PROCESS DIMENSIONS

1. Did all have an opportunity to participate?

1 2 3 4
Excellent Poor

2. Was an effort made to draw people out?

1 2 3 4
Excellent Poor

3. Was leadership shared?

1 2 3 4
Excellent Poor

4. Was there any structuring or organizing of the group?

1 2 3 4
Excellent Poor

5. Were new ideas supported? Was there an atmosphere of acceptance?

1 2 3 4
Excellent Poor

6. Did people feel free to talk? Did people listen to others?

1 2 3 4
Excellent Poor

7. Were people sensitive to the needs and concerns of others?

1 2 3 4
Excellent Poor

8. Was there shared decision-making? Was consensus reached?

1 2 3 4
Excellent Poor

PROBLEM-SOLVING AMONG US: A REAL-WORLD PROBLEM ACTED UPON BY A TEAM OF TEACHER ADVISORS.

Sixteen members of an innovation team in an urban school district had been working together for two years before they realized, at a two-week training session, that for the most part they had been functioning as "reactors," not "pro-actors."

Rather than taking initiative themselves, they had waited for teachers and administrators to call upon them for assistance. Their function, it seemed, was simply to put out "brush fires" and be available to meet crisis situations. They understood that this was part of their job and that by "reacting" they had built a considerable amount of trust and credibility with both teachers and administrators in their district. Yet at this point they felt they were capable of doing more and wanted to

At the training session, the team decided to change their approach. They would continue many of their past functions but each member would also consider initiating something new. They were going to both "react" and "pro-act." Rather than merely reacting to what others asked them to do they would brainstorm, plan and implement new strategies and programs to improve their school district.

THE ISLAND: A SIMULATED EXPERIENCE INVOLVING FANTASY

In the following exercise a group has the opportunity to either react and survive on an island or pro-act and build a community. At times the distinction is fine but usually it becomes very clear whether participants are reacting or pro-acting. Reaction maintains the status quo. Pro-action leads; at the same time, it is more likely to meet resistance and raise eyebrows.

The group is told: "You were passengers aboard a sh.p which sank at sea. Either by floating or swimming you have landed on an island. The island is a 'healthy one' and can sustain life. Your task as a group is to organize yourselves for survival."

For intergroup learning between teachers and children, parents and teachers, etc., it is best to form two island groups. Each goes to a separate area so that they assume they are alone on the island. Then, after an hour or so, the group leader shows a member from one island group that there is another group on the island. The

One group that was led through the island was divided unequally into a large sub-group of twelve participants and a small sub-group of four. Both groups worked in separate rooms until one member of the larger group was led to "discover" the small group. There was a half hour of mutual visitations back and forth and then the large group invited the small group to join it. Entrance and assimilation of one group by another became an issue.

Within the small group leadership and decision-making had been only minor issues and the group was able to organize itself in a relatively short time. By contrast the large group was unable to organize themselves for survival. For them, issues of leadership, competition, decision-making, and personality conflicts interfered with the task. The small group was naturally reluctant therefore to join the large group.

The innovation team at this time was concerned about its usefulness to and survival in the school system. Through the "Island" exercise, the team learned what they, as a small group, must look like to the larger system.

LEADERSHIP AMONG US:
THEORIES ABOUT STYLES OF LEADERSHIP IN THE REAL WORLD.

Douglas McGregor in The Human Side of Enterprise has developed two theories to explain human behavior--Theory X and Theory Y. Essentially, Theory X builds on the lower order of human needs (food, clothing, shelter) while Theory Y builds on the higher order of needs (social recognition, self-actualization, etc.)

It is important for a leader of any group to examine his assumptions--on why people behave as they do. His assumptions reflect his value system and determine his practices and how he organizes for decision-making and action.

It may be helpful to use McGregor's theory to check our own assumptions about leadership:

Theory X: MAN CANNOT BE TRUSTED

1. The average human being has an inherent dislike of work and will avoid it if he can.

2. Because of the human characteristic of dislike of work, most people must be coerced, controlled, directed, and threatened with punishment to get them to put forth adequate effort toward the achievement of organizational objectives.

3. The average human being prefers to be directed, wishes to avoid responsibility, has relatively little ambition, and above all wants security.

Theory Y: MAN CAN BE TRUSTED

1. The expenditure of physical and mental effort in work is as natural as play or rest.

2. External control and the threat of punishment are not the only means for bringing about effort toward organizational objectives. Man will exercise self-direction and self-control in the service of objectives to which he is committed.

3. Commitment to objectives is related to the rewards associated with their achievement.

4. The average human being learns, under proper conditions, not only to accept but to seek responsibility.

5. The capacity to exercise a relatively high degree of imagination, ingenuity, and creativity in the solution of organizational objectives is widely, not narrowly,

6. Under the conditions of modern industrial life, the intellectual potentialities of the average human being are only partially utilized.

The need is not so much to choose up sides as to which theory is "right," but to make our assumptions about human behavior more explicit and to check how well our own behavior reflects our assumptions. Theory Y is more dynamic than X, more optimistic about the possibility for human growth and development, more concerned with self-direction and self-responsibility, and more consistent with available social science knowledge.

Whether we choose Theory X or Theory Y influences how we organize for decision-making and action. If we accept Theory X, then it would make sense to have:

One-way communication
Strategy planning by the top leaders only
Decision-making at the top level only
A handing down of decisions to be implemented by middle management
A handing down of instructions to be carried out by the workers
(Nothing goes up except reports)

Theory Y would make it worthwhile to have:

Two-way communication
Involvement in goal setting, planning, and decision-making at each level.

MOON LANDING: A SIMULATED SITUATION CALLING FOR LEADERSHIP.

In the psycho-social learning experience called "Moon Landing," participants struggle over problems of leadership.

The group is told:

A space capsule has crashed on the surface of the moon. Several of the crew are injured. Two crew members are in good condition. They wish to rendezvous with the mother ship which is 200 miles from the capsule. Both the capsule and the mother ship are on the light side of the moon. The capsule and much of its equipment has been destroyed. The following items have not been damaged; rank these in order of importance for survival:

1 box matches
4 pk. food concentrate
50 feet nylon rope
1 parachute silk
1 portable heating unit
2 (45 caliber) pistols
1 case dehydrated milk
2 tanks of oxygen (100 lb. each)
1 stellar map of moon's constellation
1 life raft
1 magnetic compass
5 gallons water
2 signal flares
1 first-aid kit with injection needles
1 solar powered radio

The group tries, within 45 minutes, to reach a consensus on the order of items needed for survival and for return to the mother ship.

Frequently a group is unable to agree on what items are most important. Leadership is an issue. One or two people may dominate; or leadership may shift frequently. A key question that sometimes divides the group is whether survival or contact with the mother ship is most important.

Sometimes group consensus is arrived at in a short time. Ordinarily, this indicates that many people have not been active or have not exercised their judgment. Participation and assertion is then the critical issue. Other issues that often arise: uncertainty about the data given on the instruction sheet and by the group leader; groping for leadership; lack of listening; losing sight of main and important issues; humor producing a negative effect; "killer phrases" such as "it won't work," "that's ridiculous," "are you kidding;" lack of time producing pressure and frustration; assumptions and counter-assumptions.

Sometimes there are resources within the group that are not heard or dealt with.

One time a participant set up another member to express his opinions. He suggested she assume leadership of the group and backed her up, but he never took the initiative himself. When his ploy was revealed at the end of the exercise, people asked him why he didn't attempt to organize the group himself. "I didn't want to give all the answers," he replied, "In real life I am a N.A.S.A. engineer." What he didn't realize at the time was that there was no one correct order to the survival list. The important thing was how people worked together on the task as a group. Furthermore, he had abdicated the leadership role by appointing someone else. There can be side conversations, and the group can break down into two's and three's when the frustration level is high.

After the exercise, the group analyzes the process by which it went about solving the problem and making decisions.

When used with a large group, this experience is helpful in examining intergroup conflict and competition. The large group is divided into two or three sub-groups. Each sub-group has 45 minutes to record their particular solution to the problem. They then share their solution with the other groups. The group as a whole must then arrive at consensus or a common decision.

OUR SELF-CONCEPT:

A CHANGE IN SELF-CONCEPT
BY A GROUP IN THE REAL WORLD.

Role-playing is an excellent technique for resolving interpersonal conflicts. We have already seen how dramatic breakthroughs can result when two parties to a dispute reverse roles, assume the other party's position and try to enter his shoes.

Role-playing is also useful as a kind of dress-rehearsal for a major event. In one city, a group of twenty people faced the challenge of conducting three mass community meetings on an educational issue. The group met with a consultant from the Pilot Communities Program to help them prepare for their task. They selected three chairmen who, upon the consultant's suggestion, addressed the small group as if it were the audience at the mass meeting. The group then offered feedback on their presentations. This procedure worked well to loosen up all members of the planning group for the forthcoming meetings.

SIMULATED SITUATIONS RESULTING
IN A BETTER SELF-CONCEPT:

SHARING NEEDS AND STRENGTHS
RED BANANA FISH
HAPPY TIMES.

In the P.S.L.E. called "Sharing Needs and Strengths" the group brainstorms what it feels to be its strengths and then brainstorms what it feels to be its needs. Each participant writes three needs and three strengths on separate index cards. The group leader collects all cards and reads them aloud. The group then selects the two cards from the NEEDS deck and two cards from the STRENGTHS deck that seem most significant. They discuss the question: "What things can you do to share individual needs and strengths?"

In the P.S.L.E. called "The Red Banana Fish," participants gain feedback about themselves discussing what kinds of color, fruit, and animal they would like to be.

The group is divided into sub-groups of three or four people.

Each participant chooses a color that he would most want to become, if he had the chance. (Sometimes it helps to ask participants about their favorite color.) After a few minutes for reflection, they share their respective colors with other members in the group, not only identifying the color, but also giving reasons why they chose it.

Then participants choose what fruit they would like to be. Again, they reflect for a short time then discuss with the

Finally, the participants select what animal they would like to be and again explain their choices to members of their small group.

This experience may be expanded to include countries, furniture, vegetables, cities, clothing, etc.

When a group has some history together they can give "feedback" about a person's responses. This gives each group member a chance to hear how others perceive him.

A person's choice of color, fruit, and animal tells something about him. It also gives him an opportunity to talk about himself to other people. Frequently, in these discussions there is a considerable amount of humor and spontaneity.

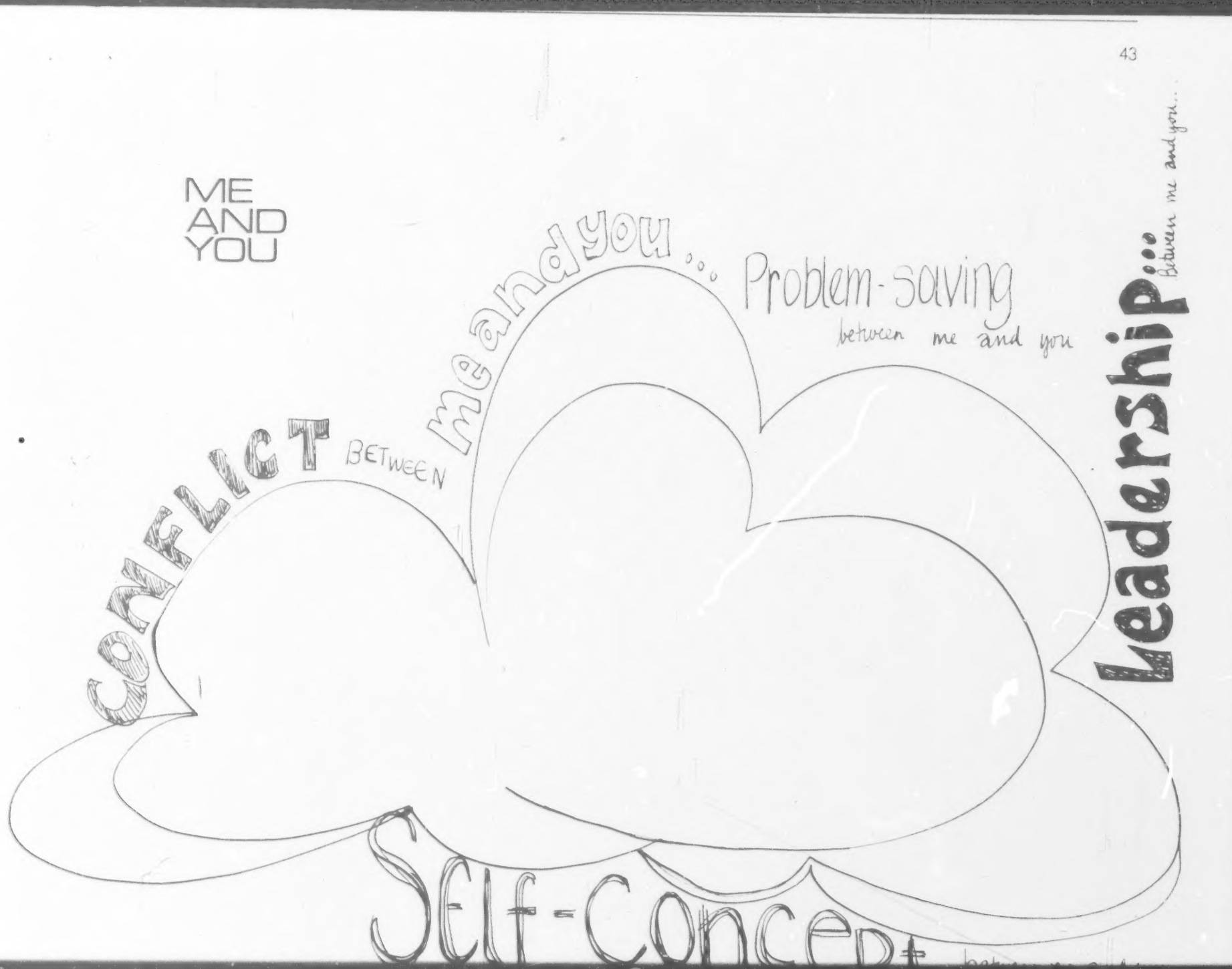
A participant in one of the workshops decided to try the "Red Banana Fish" exercise with her third grade class. One of the children decided to be a purple watermelon elephant,

> because my favorite color is purple. I chose watermelon, because I like spitting the seeds out like a gun. I chose an elephant, because an elephant is my favorite animal.

Another chose to be a

> sukadilik (psychedelic) banana monkey, because sukadilik has many colors. I like bananas because monkey eat them. I like monkeys because I like to climb trees.

In the P.S.L.E. called "Happy Times," participants begin to think, feel, and act like children. They try to recall a joyous or happy occasion from their childhood (four to eight years old). To assist their memory, they are urged to think of their friends, house, and neighborhood and to think of times when they might have received praise, won a race, or gone to a party. After a few minutes of reflection, they tell the others in the group what they remember.


ME AND YOU
CONFLICT BETWEEN meandyou...
Problem-saving between me and you
leadership... between me and you...
Self-concept

The case studies and psycho-social learning experiences in this section concern interpersonal relations between two people ("you and me").

CONFLICT: BETWEEN ME AND YOU

Real-world situation: a classroom
Simulated situation: "Hand Fights"

PROBLEM-SOLVING: BETWEEN ME AND YOU

Real-world situation: a business office
Simulated situation: "Communication and Listening"

LEADERSHIP: BETWEEN ME AND YOU

Real-world situation: a principal's office
Simulated situation: "The Trust Walk"

SELF-CONCEPT: BETWEEN ME AND YOU

Real-world situation: anywhere
Simulated situation: "Mirroring"

CONFLICT BETWEEN ME AND YOU:

A REAL WORLD CONFLICT BETWEEN TEACHER AND STUDENT.

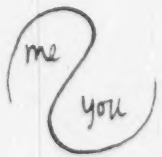
The following dialogue is a fictitious representation of a real classroom situation.

KID: Bullshit.

TEACHER: What did you say?

KID: You heard me.

TEACHER: Come up here.



KID: No.

TEACHER: Did you hear me?

KID: Yeah.

TEACHER: Yes, please.

(Silence)

All right, I'll come to you. Now what did you say?

KID: You heard me.

TEACHER: Say it again, I'm not sure I heard you.

KID: No.

TEACHER: If you don't tell me what you said, I'll send you to the principal's office.

(Silence)

TEACHER: Did you hear what I said?

KID: Yeah.

TEACHER: Yes, please.

(Silence)

TEACHER: For the last time, what did you say?

(Silence)

All right, I'm going to send you to the principal's office.

KID: What for?

TEACHER: For being obstreperous, uncooperative, difficult, and a trouble-maker.

KID: That's not true.

TEACHER: Are you calling me a liar?

KID: No.

TEACHER: I think you are. Now for the last time, what did you say?

(Silence)

TEACHER: All right, you asked for this. Here's a corridor pass. Go to the principal's office.

KID: (as he leaves) Bullshit.

In this dialogue there is no true communication between teacher and student. Responses by both are negative and hostile. Proposals and ideas are resisted and rejected. The teacher appears to have the power and is in overt control but the pupil, although seemingly powerless, is exercising indirect control. Each resents the other. Each is probably angry. Each makes assumptions about the other. The pupil sees the teacher as a policeman, dictator or the enemy; the teacher, on the other hand, views the pupil as a disrespectful trouble-maker.

The conflict is interpersonal. It is similar to intergroup conflict where commands are given and threats made. It resembles what takes place between nations close to or at war.

In the dialogue, the teacher's attitudes, perceptions and assumptions about the student were based on mistrust. His reactions were, therefore, defensive. The kid said "bullshit" and the teacher's immediate reaction was to bring out the biggest gun in his arsenal--the threat to send the offending student to the principal's office. In effect, this threat was a declaration of war or a last ditch attempt to end one.

One way to end an intergroup or interpersonal war is for both parties to agree to a truce, a period of peace, a time for rethinking and "bridge-building." Similar to what happened between the United States and Germany after World War II, a process of building mutual respect and trust between warring parties is necessary. It's not sufficient to simply stop fighting. Positive acts by one or both parties are required.

Ordinarily, it's more convenient for the teacher to begin this trust-building process than it is for the pupil. Often, trust breeds trust. If a teacher respects a student, the pupil in turn may respect the teacher. Communication is enhanced and conflict lessened.

Several different responses were possible from the teacher other than "what did you say?" He could have said, for example, "Stop that!" or "You must be joking" or even "Bullshit." Then, too, he could have said nothing at all.

HAND FIGHTING: A SIMULATED CONFLICT BETWEEN TWO PEOPLE.

In the psycho-soci l learning experience called "Hand Fighting," participants in the group choose partners and use their fingers and hands to fight and make-up, to play, and to communicate. No talking is permitted.

After three minutes each pair discusses what they were thinking and feeling during the experience.

From this expe ience, a person gains insight abou his tolerance for conflict. Some people enjoy fighting; others avoid it. Some dominate; others become passive. Some prefer to be gentle; others rough. Some want to play, while others wish to fight. Some become uncomfortable and stop well before the end of the three-minute interval; others don't want to stop. All of these reactions provide data for discussion and insight regard-

PROBLEM-SOLVING BETWEEN ME AND YOU: SOLVING A REAL WORLD PROBLEM BETWEEN TWO PEOPLE.

The following dialogue is based on a taped interview between the author who acts as the "interrogator" and a friend who acts as "respondent."

PLEASE STATE YOUR PROBLEM

My problem is to find the freedom to escape from the human rat race, the everyday world and business problems, city problems, pollution, etc. --how to escape the whole mess. Do you know what I mean?

COULD YOU STATE THE PROBLEM DIFFERENTLY?

My problem is to find the freedom to

ARE YOU SURE THAT'S THE PROBLEM?

Yeah.

(Long pause)

CAN YOU THINK OF ANOTHER WAY TO STATE THE PROBLEM?

You're trying to pull it out of me.

COULD YOU STATE IT MORE SPECIFICALLY?

Well, material things hold me down; things such as the car and the furniture.

SO NOW WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

How can I break away from material, physical things?

IS THAT THE PROBLEM?

Yes, I think so. My problem is that I want to get away.

SO WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

(Laughter)

What's the problem? The problem is being able to break away from all the luxuries. Getting back to basics; having the strength to do it. If this is really what I want, then I should be able to do it.

CAN YOU STATE THE PROBLEM IN A SIMPLE STATEMENT?

No, I don't think I can. Well, okay, simple statement. Let's see. The problem is I'm unhappy in being in today's rat race, the rat race of life. I would be content to break away and leave everything behind. Period. But the next question is how do I do it.

TRY TO STATE THE PROBLEM AGAIN.

How can I give up what I have worked hard for, but am unhappy with, and live off the land with nature?

IS THAT THE PROBLEM?

Another way to state it is that maybe I need to look at things differently. Maybe I need to learn how to accept things and not be so negative.

HOW WOULD YOU STATE THE PROBLEM NOW?

How can I change my attitude?

NOW, LET'S PHRASE THE PROBLEM IN A WAY THAT'S MOST COMFORTABLE, RIGHT, AND CAPABLE OF SOLVING.

How can I change my viewpoint? How can I see the good and accept what I have and simultaneously move away from the material and toward the natural?

Some experts claim that when a problem is clearly stated and understood, it is at least fifty per cent solved. The above dialogue allowed an individual to explore a problem and see it in a new light.

What is not conveyed in the dialogue is the tone, the that go on between the interviewee or problem-sender and the interrogator or problem-reflector. How the reflector states his questions (IS THAT THE PROBLEM? ARE YOU SURE THAT'S THE PROBLEM?) in no small way determines the effectiveness of this procedure.

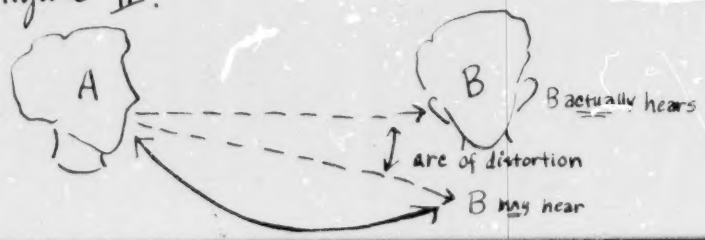
COMMUNICATION AND LISTENING: SOLVING A SIMULATED PROBLEM BETWEEN TWO PEOPLE IN A WORKSHOP.

In the psycho-social learning experience called "Communication and Listening," participants discover the obstacles to effective communication.

The workshop leader displays the following diagram.

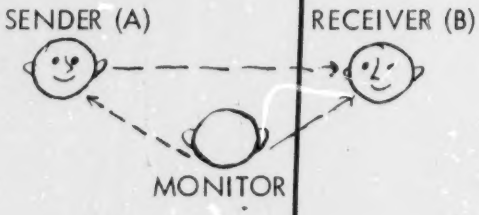
Figure I.

Figure II.



Explaining the diagram, the leader says, "The process of communication may be conceived as shown in Figure 1. Individual A sends a message and individual B receives it. Figure 2 shows what often happens. There is usually an arc of distortion between what A sends and what B receives. The reason for this is that the content sent by A is packaged in some way by A's own emotional disposition at the time. The receiver in turn may add to the package, depending on his frame of mind. As a result, the distortion may be so great that B receives very little or none of the content. A possible remedy to this problem is suggested by the following experience."

Two people in the group with differences of opinion on some issue meet in the center of the room. Another person appointed as MONITOR joins them to form an inner circle or "fishbowl" inside the larger group circle, thus:



A is to send a message to B in small packages as clearly as possible. He must organize his thoughts so as to present them logically and concisely. B, meanwhile, is to listen to A as attentively and objectively as possible. The job of the MONITOR is to intervene at opportune times. He must try to be objective on content, to intervene at the right moment, and not become "locked in." At various points the MONITOR

feedback on what B actually heard. If A is satisfied with B's reception, he sends the next package. If A is not satisfied, he restates his first message, and feedback is again given. This procedure is carried on for approximately 15 minutes.

The total group now breaks up into threesomes.

Within each threesome, A is the sender, B is the receiver; the third person is MONITOR. After ten minutes the roles are switched and then again after another ten minutes so that each member of the triad has a turn at being A, B, and MONITOR.

What Happens:

At the end of the experience, people usually discover the following blocks and aids to communication:

Some BLOCKS to communication on the part of sender A are:

unorganized thinking
too large a package at one time
speedy delivery
projection
uneasy feeling twoard B

BLOCKS on the part of the receiver B:

preconceived notions about A or topic
tension in effort to listen
projection
emotional reaction
distraction or lack of interest

Some AIDS to communication on the part of A:

clear, brief delivery
low level of emotion
objectivity
feeling of ease with B

AIDS on the part of B:

attentive listening
open-mindedness
withholding of emotional reaction
feeling of ease with A

At a staff-development workshop, two members of a teaching team asked to look at interpersonal conflict resolution. The two people requested that they work out their conflict before the group. Both participants had long felt a loss of trust and credibility between them. They had moved from being close friends to distant acquaintances and felt that their mounting conflict was at times dysfunctional to the work of the team. The two participants took turns sending and receiving messages, and a MONITOR selected by them intervened when appropriate. After an hour, the two people embraced one another and agreed to make every effort to keep the channels of communication open between them.

Through the "communication and listening" exercise, members of this teaching team saw that they had the resources and methods to deal effectively with interpersonal conflict.

LEADERSHIP BETWEEN ME AND YOU: TEACHER AND PRINCIPAL INTERACT IN A REAL-WORLD SITUATION INVOLVING LEADERSHIP AND INFLUENCE.

The following dialogue is a fictitious representation of a confrontation in a principal's office.

TEACHER: Sorry to bother you, but may I talk to you for a few moments?

PRINCIPAL: Of course, could you wait a minute or so while I finish writing this report?

(Two minute pause)

PRINCIPAL: All right, what is your problem?

TEACHER: Well, it's the same one we discussed last week.

PRINCIPAL: Oh, the one about the classroom order?

TEACHER: Well, not exactly.

PRINCIPAL: Oh, well then what is it?

TEACHER: It's about what happens to the kids I send to you for discipline matters.

PRINCIPAL: Oh, and what's that?

TEACHER: Well, it seems that nothing happens. There is no change in the kid's behavior when he returns to the classroom.

PRINCIPAL: I find that hard to believe.

TEACHER: I'm not certain, but it seems there is little change.

PRINCIPAL: Maybe you are not aware of any change, but it has been my experience that frequently, after I speak to a kid, there is an attitudinal change.

TEACHER: Attitudinal change?

PRINCIPAL: Yes, a change in perception. As you know, before I was a principal I was a guidance counselor, and I became skilled in helping kids solve their problems.

TEACHER: Will this help keep order in my classroom?

PRINCIPAL: It should. You see, discipline problems arise from lack of motivation. If kids are motivated to learn, they don't cause

point out what they have to lose if they misbehave and disturb a teacher and the class and what they have to gain if they do what they are told.

TEACHER: Does this approach work?

PRINCIPAL: I think it does. It takes me about ten minutes to motivate them, and when they leave my office they see things differently and agree with what I say.

TEACHER: It sounds so simple.

PRINCIPAL: It is.

TEACHER: Thank you and sorry I bothered you.

PRINCIPAL: No bother, come back again.

Leading depends less on handing out recipes and advice than it does on empathetic listening. The following poem helps illustrate this point:

> The mind
> can solve a problem
> but the problem
> will not cease;
> Conflicts
> only are resolved
> through emotional release.

Another writer once expressed the importance of listening in this way:

> Listening is a magnetic and strange thing, a creative force....The friends that listen to us are the ones we move toward, and we want to sit in their radius as though it did us good, like ultraviolet rays...When we are listened to, it creates us, makes us unfold and expand. Ideas actually begin to grow within us and come to life...It makes people happy and free when they are listened to...When we listen to people there is an alternating current, and this recharges us so that we never get tired of each other. We are constantly being re-created.
>
> Now there are brilliant people who cannot listen much. They have no ingoing wires on their apparatus. They are entertaining but exhausting too. I think it is because these lecturers, these brilliant performers, by not giving us a chance to talk, do not let us express our thoughts and expand; and it is this expressing and expanding that makes the little creative fountain inside us begin to spring and cast up new thoughts and unexpected laughter and wisdom.

I discovered all this about three years ago, and truly it made a revolutionary change in my life. Before that, when I went to a party I would think anxiously: "Now try hard. Be lively. Say bright things. Talk. Don't let down." And when tired, I would have to

> drink a lot of coffee to keep this up. But now before going to a party, I just tell myself to listen with affection to anyone who talks to me, to be in their shoes when they talk, to try to know them without my mind pressing against theirs, or arguing, or changing the subject. No. My attitude is: "Tell me more. This person is showing me his soul. It is a little dry and meager and full of grinding talk just now, but presently he will begin to think, not just automatically to talk. He will show his true self. Then he will be wonderfully alive...

Think what might have happened in that scene in the principal's office if the teacher had been encouraged to say more than the principal. Supposing the principal had followed what the psychologist Carl Rogers calls the "echo" approach. He would then have concentrated simply on keeping on the teacher's "wavelength" of thought. The principal who employs this approach might discover that his method for leading is not an appropriate one. Some of his ideas might help but they can never give the complete solution to a problem. Frequently, what the teacher is really asking for in this situation is not a solution but support. By coming to the principal, the teacher is saying, "allow me to work out my own problems; allow me to exercise initiative in solving this problem. Will you back me up?"

There is a place for both expert advice and empathetic listening. Knowledgeable solutions, when they're packaged in a warm, human empathetic response, based on intelligent insights and experience, are acceptable to teachers. Knowledge alone is not what the teacher is asking; empathy alone is not what he wants either. He wants both. Together they seem to help.

Of course it takes considerable effort to listen empathetically to someone. For instance, a principal may be absorbed in preparing a budget report or writing a speech, and someone from his teaching staff drops in for a conversation. He could convey to this person impatience and distraction as he talks. On the other hand, he may realize the importance of giving top priority to the people working for him; if so, these interruptions become extremely valuable. If he stops doing what he is absorbed in, changes his thinking to concentrate on what the person wishes to say, and makes an effort to respond empathetically, then several things can happen. First, the personal relationship can improve. Credibility and trust is increased. They can share some of their concerns with one another. Sometimes the principal can even share what he is working on with the visitor and what some of his problems are at that moment. This reflex to drop everything and concentrate fully on the visitor in his office has dividends both for that person, for the principal and for the task that they are involved in.

THE TRUST WALK	TWO PEOPLE INTERACT IN A SIMULATED SITUATION INVOLVING LEADERSHIP AND INFLUENCE.

In the psycho-social learning experience called "The Trust Walk," participants learn what it feels like both to lead and to be led.

(!) Divide a group into pairs. Have one person in the pair pretend to be blind for fifteen minutes while his partner leads him and helps him explore the surrounding environment. (Use blindfolds if convenient.)

(2) Reverse roles for another fifteen minutes.

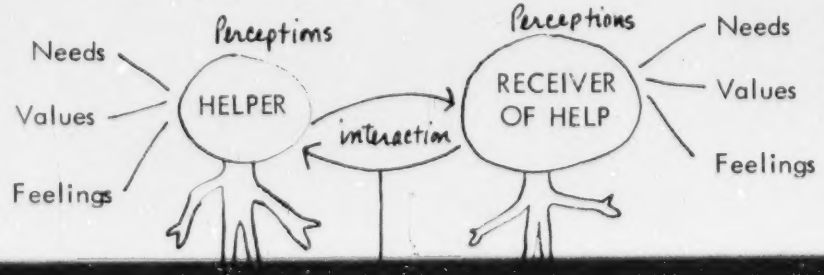
(3) Discuss how it felt to be blind and to be the leader. How did communication take place? What was easiest, leading or following?

This experience allows a person both to be almost totally dependent on another when blind and almost in complete control of another as the person leading. When blind a person is uneasy at first, but then gradually adjusts and may even feel most secure while being provided for and led. Usually, after a few minutes a communications system of touch and feel develops. From this exercise, people learn about their risk-taking level. They often compare the experience with real-life situations in which they were hesitant and fearful to try something new and different and then found that it was not as bad as anticipated. Insights sometimes occur--how does one feel when he abandons himself and allows someone else to direct and lead him? Frequently, people who are rather compulsive and must control everything find this a very valuable experience. Sometimes people learn that they can handle responsibility better than they thought. As the name of the experience indicates, trust commonly develops between the two persons in partnership, and they learn that openness and trust can develop without a single word being spoken.

SELF-CONCEPT BETWEEN ME AND YOU: TWO PEOPLE IN A REAL WORLD SITUATION STRENGTHEN THEIR SELF-CONCEPT BY MUTUAL TRUST AND LISTENING.

Imagine a situation between two people--parent-child, teacher-student, husband-wife--in which one person seeks to help the other with a personal problem.

What takes place between the HELPER and RECEIVER OF HELP is diagrammed below.*



The helping situation is dynamic, i.e., characterized by interaction which is both verbal and non-verbal.

Both the helper and the receiver of help have different needs (biological and psychological), feelings, and a set of values, and both are trying to satisfy needs in the situation.

Both HELPER and RECEIVER have different perceptions of each other, of the problem, and of the entire situation (expectancies, roles, standards, etc.)

The interaction takes place in relation to some need or problem which may be external to the two individuals, interwoven with the relationship of the two individuals, or rooted in the relationship between the two individuals. Wherever the beginning point and the focus of emphasis, as soon as interaction begins, the relationship between the two individuals becomes an important element in the helping situation.

The HELPER and RECEIVER each have certain objectives in the interaction deriving from his particular needs, values, feelings, and perceptions.

Both helper and receiver have power or influence in relation to the situation. It is the receiver of help, however, who controls the question of whether in the final analysis change takes place.

To be fruitful, the helping situation needs these characteristics:

1. Mutual trust.
2. Recognition that the helping situation is a joint exploration.

3. Listening, with the helper listening more than the individual receiving help.

4. Behavior by the helper which is calculated to make it easier for the individual receiving help to talk.

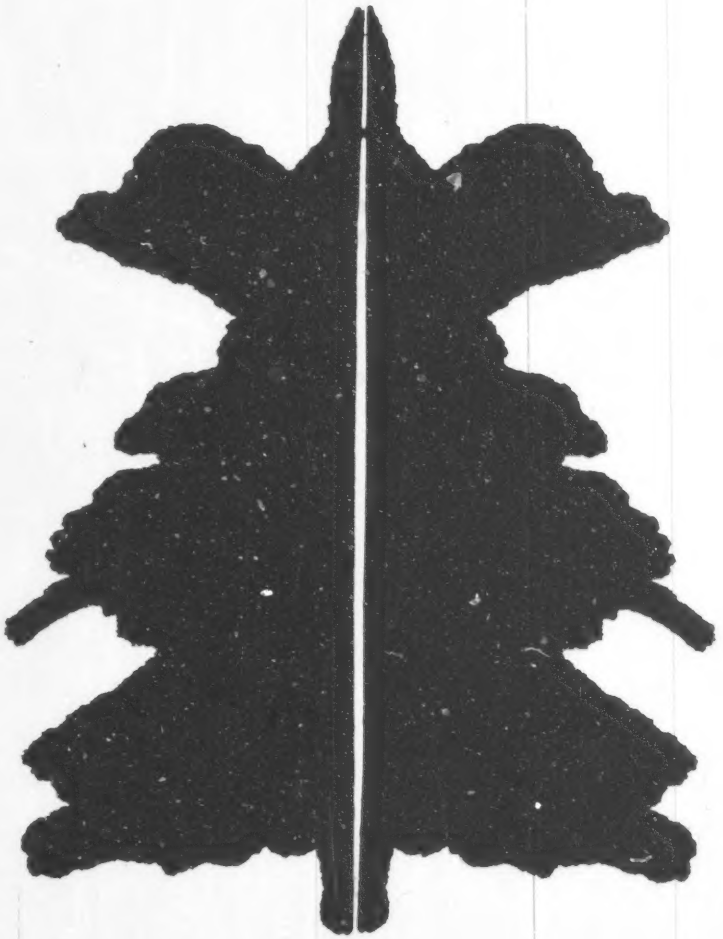
"Feedback" is a way of helping another person to consider changing his behavior. It is communication to a person (or a group) which gives that person information about how he affects others. As in a guided missile system, feedback helps an individual keep his behavior "on target" and thus better achieve his goals.

MIRRORING: TWO PEOPLE GAIN INSIGHTS ABOUT THEMSELVES IN A SIMULATED SITUATION.

In the psycho-social learning experience called "Mirroring," workshop participants find out whether they prefer to lead or to follow somebody else.

The group is divided into pairs. Partners stand and face one another and pretend that each is the mirror for the other. What one does, the other must do. (No talking is allowed.)

After three minutes, the partners discuss what they were thinking and feeling while "mirroring." Some discover that they are more comfortable leading while others prefer to imitate or follow. Two people are able to manage "shared leadership" by continually shifting the roles of leader and follower.



ME
INTERNAL CONFLICT
MY Self-CONCEPT
PROBLEM-SOLVING
PROBLEM-SOLVING BY ME
My Leadership Style

The commentaries, case studies, and psycho-social learning experiences in this section concern intra-personal issues within a single person ("me").

The exercises, because they require the involvement of only one person and not a workshop group, are written so that the reader may participate in them himself if he so desires.

INTERNAL CONFLICT

Real-world situation: Joel's class
Simulated situation: "The Coping Triangle"

PROBLEM-SOLVING BY ME

Real-world situation: classrooms
Simulated situation: "Force Field Analysis"

MY LEADERSHIP STYLE

Real-world situation: a workshop
Simulated situation: "Leadership Dilemma"

MY SELF-CONCEPT

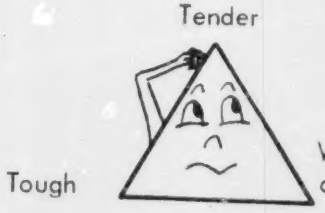
Real-world situation: a man's mind
Simulated situation: "Who Am I?"

INTERNAL CONFLICT: A REAL-WORLD SITUATION INVOLVING INTRAPERSONAL CONFLICT.

A major theme in Joel's class as well as in my leadership of a workshop (see remainder of this book) is the struggle with ambiguity. The conflict of personal needs and anxieties with group needs and forces always seems to appear. The sensitive person is frequently aware of personal ambiguity. Should I give in to the other or the group or should I hold firm? Should I fight, withdraw, or ignore? Rarely is the answer clear.

THE COPING TRIANGLE: A SIMULATED SITUATION INVOLVING INTRAPERSONAL CONFLICT.

How do you respond to conflict? Examine the diagram below:



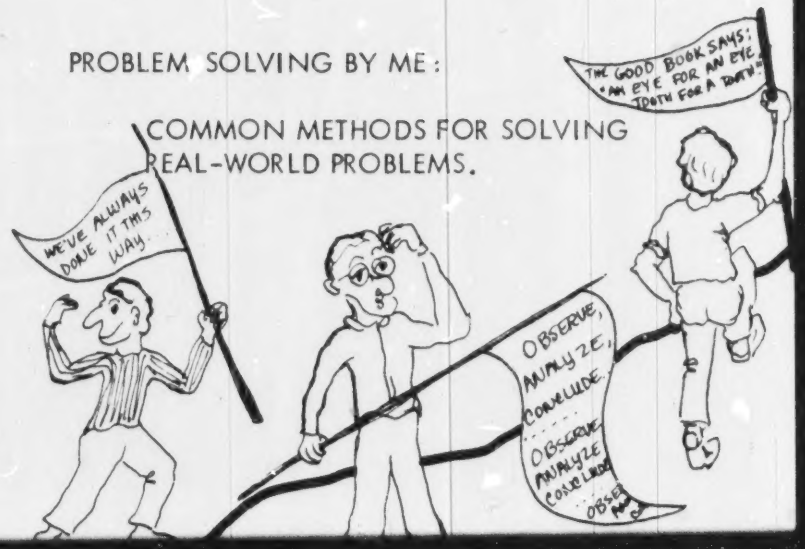
"In Conflict, I am . . ."

How do you personally cope with emotional issues? Are you tough? Tender? Or do you usually withdraw from an emotional issue?

Place a mark on the triangle to indicate how you usually respond. Share your answer with others and explain yourself. Ask others to give you feedback about your perception of yourself.

PROBLEM SOLVING BY ME:

COMMON METHODS FOR SOLVING REAL-WORLD PROBLEMS.



How to solve problems? Each of us solves them differently. Each of us solves them in a similar way. I solve them differently today than I did yesterday, last week, last year. As I change, my problem-solving ability and "method" changes. There is no one way.

An elderly, black elementary school principal in her late fifties solved problems by preventing them from happening. One of her strategies was to keep complete control over all the doors to the classrooms, the building, and the lockers. In her office she had a cabinet with a key to every lock in the school building.

Another teacher in the inner-city also prevented problems by issuing detailed regulations to her pupils. At the sound of a bell the pupils would form in lines to march into the classroom. At a given signal they would take off their boots, then their coats, then their hats. Another signal and they would sit down. The procedure for leaving the classroom was similarly prescribed. No pupil would be recognized by the teacher unless the pupil raised an arm straight and did not make any noise. Certain areas of the classroom such as the rug in front of the teacher's desk were off limits to the pupils. They were forbidden to ever touch anything on the teacher's desk or in the classroom storage closet. The teacher explained that these regulations enabled her and the pupils to do their job of learning. The strict structure provided security for both the teacher and the students. She felt that only in an orderly environment could learning and teaching take place. If some unforeseen circumstance should happen she would immediately make a regulation about it. She said this showed her flexibility and referred to her system of control as "organic regulation."

A third teacher used a completely opposite system for solving classroom problems. She wanted students themselves to be responsible for problem-solving in the classroom. One day one of the students knocked over a bucket of water. The teacher noticed this but didn't do anything. One of the little girls in the class said to the teacher that the bucket was knocked over and that there was water on the floor and it was very messy. The teacher agreed with her and asked her what she was going to do about it. The little girl asked for some help, and in a short time three of the pupils obtained mops, papers and rags, and cleaned the floor completely. The teacher meanwhile continued to work with the other pupils.

FORCE-FIELD ANALYSIS: AN EFFECTIVE METHOD FOR SOLVING REAL-WORLD PROBLEMS

Instructions for the Reader

(1) Using diagram on the next page state a problem. Think of what it would be like if the problem were solved or didn't exist. List those forces from inside and outside of you which push you toward solving the problem. List those forces which hold you back.

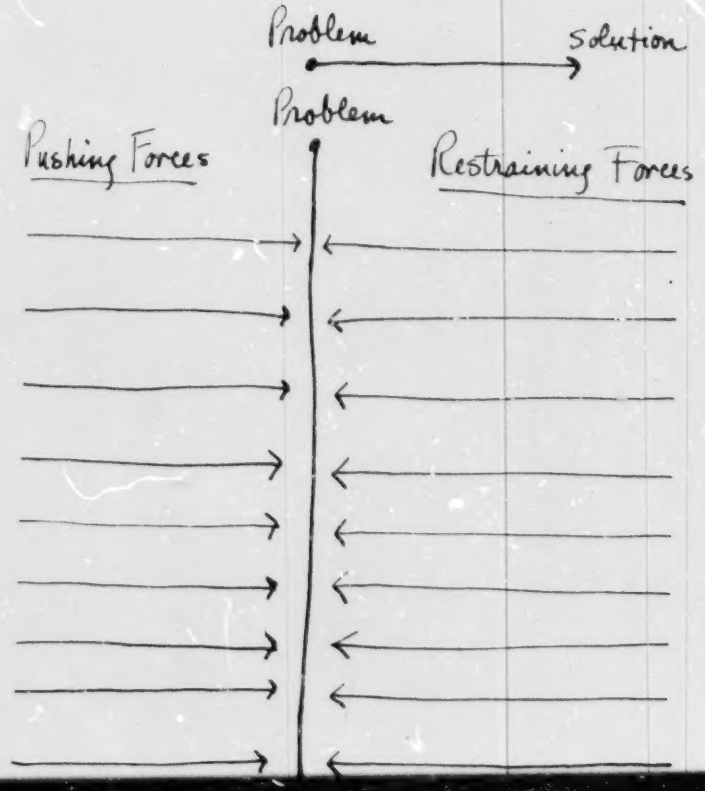
(2) Select one of the restraining forces and "brainstorm" the ways you might lessen it. Do this with other restraining forces.

(3) Select one of the pushing forces and "brainstorm" how you might further increase it. Do this with other pushing forces.

(4) Make a contract with yourself to DO something. Move from thinking about solving the problem to some ACTION strategy. Plan to ACT. Resolve to DO something.

Force-Field Analysis

Statement of the problem:



LEADERSHIP BY ME

A SITUATION INVOLVING ISSUE OF LEADERSHIP.

The following statement was written by a teacher who once attended a group dynamics workshop:

I vividly remember the day that the group leader wanted people to learn what it felt like to be completely controlled by another person. He suggested that the participants in the group form pairs, and for a period of ten minutes one member of the pair control the other and then reverse roles for another ten-minute period. When I was being led, my partner ordered me to stand on a chair, kneel on the floor, lie on the floor, and roll around. For sometime, he led me about the room between people as though I were a dog. He had complete control over me. Reversing roles, I ordered him to jump, dance, and run up and down a corridor outside the room. I can still recall how intensely hostile and embarrassed I felt as I was being led around the room as a dog. In the discussion that followed he said he experienced similar

Reflecting on this experience, I understood what my pupils must feel like in my classroom when I, in a sense, make them jump through hoops. The pupils usually obey, but with feelings of resentment and anger, and there is, of course, that small percentage who resist, disobey, and may attempt to sabotage my lessons.

THE LEADERSHIP DILEMMA: A METHOD FOR IDENTIFYING YOUR PERSONAL STYLE OF LEADERSHIP

A basic dilemma may be a discrepancy between what I believe to be right and desirable and what I do in practice. Or--

How democratic can I be?
How authoritarian must I be?

I face a series of dilemmas:

I have a tradition of competition...	but I must be cooperative.
I am under pressure to get the job done--to be efficient...	but I believe all points of view

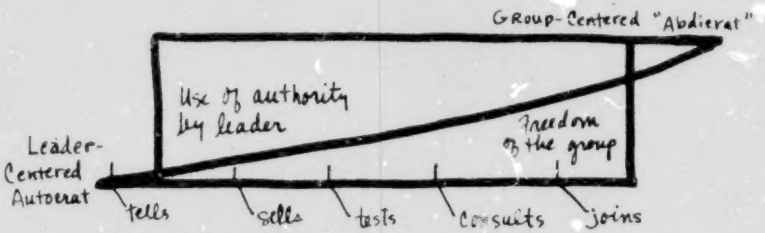
I am pushed for time...

but I want participative decision-making, and this takes time.

I see opportunities for quick results in one-man decisions...

but I believe shared responsibility makes for better and longer lasting solutions.

The dilemma may be stated in terms of a continuum:



If I extend the continuum at either extreme, I get autocracy or abdication. The autocrat violates my traditional values and my self-image as a person who is open and sensitive. The abdicrat is irresponsible and violates my concepts of the work a leader should get done.

How do I decide where I stand on the continuum? The answer is found in these factors:

1. Forces in me, including my motives and needs and my assumptions about people (colleagues, subordinates, superiors, peers)

   I would have to look at--

   My confidence in the group--my assumptions about people
   My leadership inclinations
   My feelings of security--and my "tolerance for ambiguity"
   My own motives as related to my own needs I am satisfying

2. Forces in the group, including my understanding of members' needs, motives, perceptions

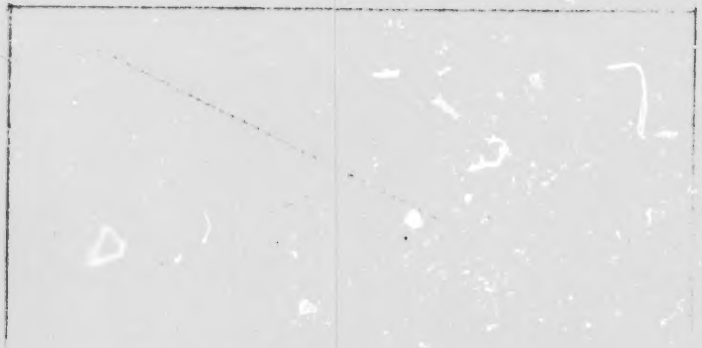
   I would have to look at--

   Their needs for independence or dependence
   Their readiness to assume responsibility
   Their tolerance for ambiguity
   Their interest in the problem
   Their understanding of goals and their role in formulating them
   Their knowledge, experience, and skill in the particular task (and means of increasing these)
   Their expectations
   The effect on the group of my own assumptions about them, their motives and needs.

3. Forces in the situation

   I would have to look at--

   Type of organization
   Effectiveness of the group
   Pressure of time
   Consequences of action
   My perception and the group's perception of the task



MY SELF-CONCEPT

WHAT KIND OF SELF-CONCEPT HELPS IN A REAL-WORLD SITUATION?

The following statement is from Marvin Rosenblum's The Open Teacher, another book produced by the Pilot Communities Program:

"Regardless of the type of classroom a teacher is involved in, or the limits of curriculum that exist, the communications and relationship levels are determined by the quality of openness that the teacher possesses and models."

"If the teacher can take risks that will 'expose' himself to the class, then children can also show themselves. If the teacher trusts the children and can show it, then children can also trust him. If the teacher deals honestly with issues, then children can let honest feelings be released and honest relationships exist. If the teacher takes as well as gives and lets the value of open give-and-take be discovered, then children can and will behave at the gut level of human endeavor. If the teacher shows anger, then it is all right for children to feel angry. Ultimately, the aim is to communicate as a person rather than as a role-player."

"The teacher takes, risks, establishes trust by showing trust and caring, deals honestly with each child, and lets both giving and taking take place. The teacher both models and facilitates; he listens carefully; he looks carefully."

WHO AM I? A SIMULATED SITUATION ALLOWING YOU TO DEVELOP YOUR SELF-CONCEPT

Instructions for the Reader

(1) Take a sheet of paper. Fold it into three parts. Open the paper and tear along the creases made by folding. You should now have nine pieces of paper.

(2) Consider what roles you play and what you consider to be your personality traits. Some examples of roles are: father, husband, teacher, truck driver. How do you see yourself? That is, what do you feel to be your personality characteristics? For instance, some words which might come to mind are: helper, lover, angry, peaceful, afraid.

(3) Now ask yourself the question--"Who Am I?" Respond by whatever words come to mind. Each

nine pieces of paper. Usually, the closer the words are to your personality traits, the more effective the experience will be.

(4) After you have written one word on each piece of paper, arrange the papers in their order of importance. Place the least important on top and the most important on the bottom and arrange them accordingly.

(5) Remove these traits or roles individually, one by one, very slowly, to give yourself time to think about what it would be like without each one. It's similar to removing the layers from an onion until we get down to the core, or like removing the rings from the bark of a tree. The idea is to gradually strip yourself of your roles and traits and to enter into yourself.

(6) After all the traits or roles have been removed, pick the one you value the most. Then pick the one you value the second most and the one you value the third most. Then select one you may wish to get rid of. Select two, three, or more of the ones you wish to get rid of, tear them up, and THROW THEM AWAY.

(7) Arrange or organize the papers in their order of importance once again. Have you arranged the papers differently this time from the way you did the first time?

II. I LEAD WORKSHOPS

I lead workshops. Where I lead them often depends on the group I am with. Usually it's teachers. I can readily identify with what teachers go through from day to day because I have been a teacher myself most of my life.

A friend of mine once outlined the problems he had that eventually forced him to quit teaching. He put it this way:

> First of all I was constantly battling with recalcitrant students. Many students didn't respond to my teaching no matter what I did. Second, administrators pestered me with paper work and petty regulations. I was a creative teacher but often feared going my own way because the administration would have my head. Third, I found little cooperation and support among my colleagues. I was all alone in that classroom of mine and no one seemed to care about anything except that I maintain a semblance of order. These three things combined to make fatigue, frustration, worry, and even bitterness a part of my daily life as a teacher.

That's a pretty grim picture, but I can understand what my friend means. I've felt that way myself. And I

Editor's Note: When speaking of the use of P.S.L.E.'s, Fred can be analytical and impersonal as in the pre-

My job as a workshop leader, stated in simplest terms, is to increase the confidence of teachers by allowing them to further develop their self-concept. Some teachers see themselves as powerless to change the daily classroom routine. In a workshop they learn to take initiative and gain a sense of power. Some teachers assume that their problems are unique to themselves; in a workshop they come to understand that their problems are common to all. They feel uncertain how students are feeling and reacting to their teaching; in a workshop they gain honest and often revealing feedback about themselves. Their methods in the classroom fail to get the desired results; experiences in a workshop equips them with new approaches.

All teachers will not adopt a particular set of classroom methods following a workshop. That is not the purpose. But every teacher should come away from a workshop with a more open attitude toward children, other teachers, administrators, the educational process--and above all toward himself.

ME AND THE RESOURCE TEAM

It's a challenge to explain in writing what training workshops achieve with the teachers who attend them. Perhaps if you see how I, as the group leader, interacted with a resource team of teacher advisors, you can more easily appreciate the nature of the learning experience that the group and its leader shared in common.

First of all, it's important to recognize that a group leader like myself is no superman. I have just as many fears and anxieties going into a group as the people I'm supposed to train. With this team, I had particular cause to feel anxious and uncertain of my ground. Shortly before the workshop began, the evaluation staff of our project issued a report which, in effect, said this team had not achieved all of its stated objectives. I myself was not involved with this rather negative evaluation report, but I could easily be associated with it as part of the central office administration. Some team members probably felt uneasy with me for this reason.

Then too, I was white and the team was black. Finally, I lacked the support of the team leader. The leader, a woman, felt the team could be doing more important things than taking a week off for psycho-social learning. She reluctantly went along with the workshop only because most team members were interested in it.

I had anticipated serious problems working with this group. On the first day of the workshop, I sensed tension and suspicion in others and reciprocated in kind.

How to overcome these feelings in five days? I fell back, as one must, on my personal style of leadership. Essentially this meant the repeated employment of three strategies:

(1) I would openly share my personal expectations and concerns with the group.

(2) I would show a willingness to listen to and accomodate the concerns of individuals in the group.

(3) I would use, when appropriate, exercises to nurture our trust for one another.

Actually I didn't do very much with the first strategy. Monday, the opening day of the workshop, I expressed only my "official" concerns, not my personal concerns. My goal for the week, I said, was to use P.S.L.E.'s to develop our understanding of human relations and group dynamics. Ten P.S.L.E.'s I developed would act as catalysts for learning about interpersonal relations. I hoped that at the end of the workshop the team members would edit and revise these experiences for a workbook they could themselves use in the schools.

I didn't tell them of my anxieties about some of the distrust I sensed between us. I hoped to overcome our mutual suspicion in other ways.

The next thing I did, after finishing my introductory statement, was to invite the team to share their own expectations and concerns. They were as polite and guarded as I had been. One participant said he wanted to become more task-oriented; another wanted to learn something about gaining entrance into a strange group; another wanted to know more about the art of group leadership; and another hoped to adapt the workbook of P.S.L.E.'s to the needs of the inner-city. So that everyone understood my leadership style, I told the group I believed in consensus as a good method for group-decison making. Everyone would have a voice in giving direction to the workshop. My role, I said, would be to facilitate the process of achieving the group's expectations.

I tried on a number of occasions to practice what I had preached on that first day. In fact, the very next morning, I expressed a concern that the group was letting me assume too much authority and responsibility. I wanted

of writing and editing the workbook. They agreed that the workbook was, after all, their product, and they'd better make the effort to write it. Thereafter individuals volunteered to take responsibility for specific parts of the workbook.

Shortly afterward, a team member came up with an idea for a group exercise. Why not use a Polaroid camera, he said, to take pictures of individuals in the group? The group would then tell the person being photographed how to pose and what they thought of the picture. The photos might be tacked to the bulletin board and used in different ways with the group. I was delighted with this original idea from a participant.

And on the next day, Wednesday, one of the women participants suggested another exercise, "Passing the Emotion," which we promptly carried out. The idea was to communicate a feeling by bodily gesture and then pass that gesture (and accompanying feeling) from person to person. A man moved over and quietly kissed a woman on the cheek. She in turn kissed another woman, and the kiss was exchanged around the group. An embrace was passed around. And then a shove. The exercise ended with four members embracing each other.

My belief in group consensus and shared concerns took a different form on the morning of the third day. I was very much aware that the team was going through a difficult period. Only two weeks before the workshop, the team experienced a change of leadership. Also, some members had resigned. Those who remained were looking forward to vacation immediately after the workshop. Turmoil was the natural outcome of these combined pressures. Participants were called away from

left early because of other commitments of higher priority.

How to react to this outside interference with the workshop? I could have ignored the situation and continued to do "my thing." I could have delivered an ultimatum such as: "You've committed yourselves to this workshop, but it seems you're not taking that commitment too seriously. If you don't play the game my way, I'm going to take my marbles and go home."

Instead, I tried to accommodate the group's understandable anxieties about outside pressures. I started Wednesday's session by raising the issue of outside pressures. These presented real problems for everyone, I said, and had to be considered. If we ignored or suppressed them, they would block the learnings we were seeking to generate in the workshop. I was anxious but not unbearably so about doing "my own thing." After all, at this point we had already gone through eight P.S.L.E.'s with only two more to go to realize our minimum goals. I could understand the team's need to discuss together the outside issues which were of utmost concern to them. So I would encourage an integration of "real world" problems with the attainment of our other goals.

This strategy of accommodation, I hoped, would release some anxiety and foster the climate of trust and openness most conducive to learning. The reaction of the group to what I said is best described as a "sigh of relief." In some ways they felt obligated to the tasks outside, to their team leader, and to me. When they heard from me a willingness to "let go," they felt free to deal with their anxieties and conflicts. That afternoon, upon the suggestion of a participant, we rescheduled the remainder of the workshop. Mornings would now be devoted to P.S.L.E.'s; there'd be a two-hour lunch break for talking over the team's "real world" problems; and the afternoon would be split between P.S.L.E.'s and producing the workbook.

But the process of accommodation and renegotiation was not over yet. The very next afternoon I said I was getting anxious about the little time remaining. Should we attempt to squeeze in all the remaining exercises on the original schedule or choose one or two of them? Sharing my concerns about the task helped lessen my compulsiveness and helped members of the group share in the decision-making. The outcome of my request for negotiation was the decision to do only one more exercise.

My occasional efforts to share my personal concerns and my persistent efforts to listen to and accommodate the ideas and concerns of the group accounted to some extent for the gradual removal of the original spirit of suspicion and its replacement by a feeling of trust and group unity. There is little doubt that most of this change occurred because of the experiences (P.S.L.E.'s) we went through.

In this workshop the following P.S.L.E.'s were used:

Happy Times (see p. 43)
The Red Banana Fish (see p. 42)
Force-Field Analysis (see p. 62)
Sharing Needs and Strengths (see p. 41)
Moon Landing (see p. 39)
Communication and Listening (see p. 50)
Non-Verbal Exercises (see pp. 47, 58)
Who Am I? (see p. 65)

PSYCHO-SOCIAL LEARNING EXPERIENCES

Each of these P.S.L.E.'s performed special functions in advancing the group to a new level.

HAPPY TIMES and THE RED BANANA FISH were essentially warm-up exercises. Introduced on the first day, they were used to reduce tension among the team members (and myself).

In HAPPY TIMES, some individuals recalled several incidents; others couldn't recall any. One incident often triggered another both within and between individuals. Gradually the group became noisier and everyone became more active and rather childlike in behavior.

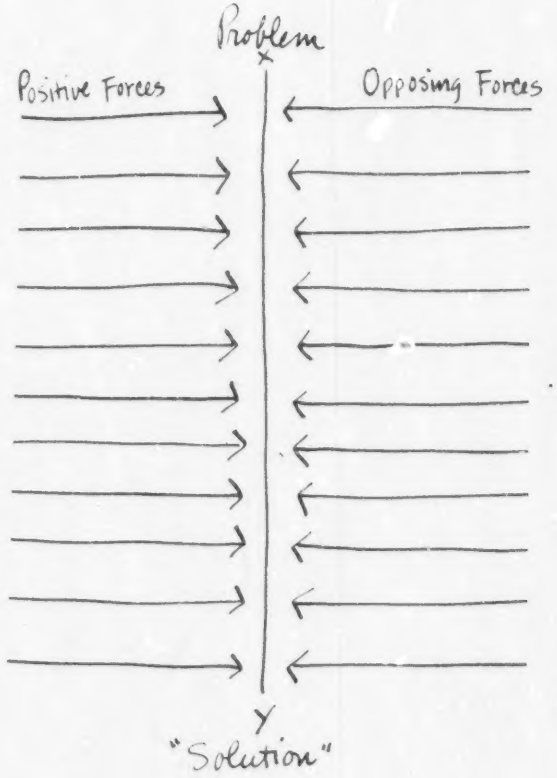
They began to understand the possible uses of P.S.L.E.'s when we switched to the RED BANANA FISH. People found it easy and intriguing to select a color, animal, or fruit that they most closely identified with. Most members saw value for using it both with children in the school and adults in the community. Up until this time the group had been rather stiff and formal. Now they began to relax. After this exercise, people began to work with each other with some ease and comfort. It was something of a breakthrough.

The Resource Team was created to assist selected inner-city schools with the support and advice of teacher consultants trained in new methods and curriculum. When I met them, the team had problems of a dual nature. First, the client schools unloaded upon the team some of their most difficult problems. Secondly, the team had

shop I designed for the team addressed both varieties of problems simultaneously.

Among the P.S.L.E.'s I used was one that related directly to a problem that came to the team by way of a client school. The principal of an elementary school had been having trouble with the attitudes of incoming teachers who were very young and often shocked by the physical conditions and "run-down" surroundings of the school. Many of them were white and had to work with black and Spanish-speaking students. The principal had asked the team to help her with the task of developing within these new teachers positive attitudes, a sense of commitment and involvement in the task of educating children in her school.

It was, I thought, a good problem on which to use the Force-field analysis technique of problem-solving first formulated by Kurt Lewin. I drew a vertical line on a large piece of paper. Point X, I said, is where the new teachers will be when they come on that first day of school. The goal of the team was to move them to Point Y where they would exhibit positive attitudes, a sense of commitment and involvement. Next I drew arrows perpendicular to this vertical line on both sides. The arrows pushing toward Y, I explained, were positive forces and the arrows pushing against X in the opposite direction were opposing forces.



I asked the group what they saw as being the opposing forces. They listed:

resentment
inexperience
lack of confidence
low expectancy
thinking that inner-city children are no different from suburban children
insecurity

Next I asked the group to list the forces they thought would move these young teachers towards Point Y. What were the positive forces pushing? They listed:

enthusiasm
opportunities
support
information
friendship
community orientation

One way of moving from Point X to Point Y, I suggested, was to lessen the opposing forces and increase the pushing forces. I asked them to select one of the opposing forces and consider how the team might lessen one of these forces. They selected "resentment".

On a large piece of paper I wrote "how to lessen resentment". They mentioned:

physical change
welcome them
share our concerns
demonstrate our concerns
demonstrate support.

They then selected "support" as one of the pushing forces to work on. I wrote on a piece of paper; "In what ways can the team demonstrate support?" They mentioned:

anticipate their needs
be there when needed
volunteer to help

SHARING NEEDS AND STRENGTHS and MOON LANDING were helpful for entirely different reasons. The group came away from these experiences with new ideas about how they could work together as a team. In SHARING NEEDS AND STRENGTHS, they concluded that what they needed above all were "support" and "autonomy;" what they could contribute best were "team cohesion" and "curriculum skills."

In MOON LANDING, the insights were richer and more diverse. Participants learned about the mistakes that can easily be made in the course of group decision-making. For example, one member with a science background, a strong resource, went unrecognized while two others in the group vied for leadership. How to arrive at group consensus? How to choose a leader? What to do when time was running out? These were all hotly debated issues. Each sub-group experienced confusion over the data on the instruction sheet and a conflict over leadership. Lack of listening was a problem. Main issues were lost sight of. Humor produced negative effects. Killer phrases like "it won't work" and "that's ridiculous" destroyed creative suggestions. There was anxiety, frustration, assumptions and counter-assumptions. Perhaps the chief learning from both MOON LANDING and SHARING NEEDS AND STRENGTHS was the recognition that every group contains within it resources rich enough to solve its problems. Find a way to utilize those re-

Another exercise called COMMUNICATION AND LISTENING helped the team understand how a speaker's message could become distorted or only half heard by a listener.

I asked the group to describe to me what they felt was the package or non-verbal wrapping that surrounds our verbal messages. They suggested such things as "eyes," "tone of voice," "hands," and "body movements." Three volunteers then sat in a fishbowl and acted out the roles of SENDER, RECEIVER, and MONITOR. The SENDER's job was to communicate a message to the RECEIVER. The MONITOR was to intervene at appropriate intervals to check whether the message had in fact been communicated. After the activity we talked about blocks to communication presented by both SENDER and RECEIVER.

The group saw this experience as most practical, not only for themselves, but also in aiding teachers and other clients with whom they would be involved. It stimulated considerable discussion and personal feedback and sharing; it moved the group to a new level. Most of the people were now sitting on the floor. They seemed to be very relaxed. Several had their shoes off, and the conversation was free flowing. Most of the group went out of their way to tell me that they had gained something valuable from the day's events.

Mid-way in the workshop I thought it appropriate to introduce a "non-verbal" experience. I asked members of the team to close their eyes and not to speak throughout the exercise. Upon my suggestion we listened to our inner selves, our hands over our ears to help us listen better. We felt the space around us--touching our chairs and feeling the air in front [illegible] hands, arms, head, and body. Then we all stood and moved close together, automatically holding each other's hands as we pressed closer and closer. Spontaneously we formed a close-knit circle with people's arms interlocked. In this position I then suggested that we hum whatever we felt like. We hummed different tunes. Finally, we opened our eyes and began to talk about our feelings during these various experiences.

In the discussion that followed, several stated they had gotten insights about themselves and others. They felt uncomfortable and "uptight", for example, about experiencing affection and physical contact. When they felt uncomfortable or somewhat threatened, their response was to laugh or to withdraw or to ignore their feeling. A few reported they felt ill at ease at first, but then in a short time felt quite at ease and, in fact, very comfortable, especially when the group was locked close together and humming. Most said they felt united and cohesive as a team. They were impressed with how this feeling can come about in such a short period of time. By taking risks, they discovered, one can learn.

The non-verbal experience impressed them with how radically people can differ in their reactions to a common event. This insight can increase a teacher's tolerance for widely disparate student reactions to classroom lessons. Also, the team felt bonds of unity and mutual support that had previously been weak or lacking. Toward the end of the workshop, there was more leadership from the group and less from me, more confrontation between team members, and an increase in original ideas regarding group process.

began to see that they valued some things far more than others. One participant was surprised to discover how highly he valued his capacity for reading. A woman said at first she thought she ranked her wife role ahead of her mother role, but then discovered, after imagining herself stripped of these roles, that the reverse was true.

The COPING TRIANGLE probably called for the highest level of self-exposure and personal risk-taking. That is why I saved it for the end, when participants trusted each other enough to talk about their personal styles. The feedback we gave each other in this exercise--"I never saw you as 'tough'" and "You certainly didn't ignore conflict last year when you confronted that fifth grade teacher"--was extremely valuable.

This description of the use of P.S.L.E.'s in a workshop, only begins to demonstrate their value. After all, they are created on the premise that experience is the best teacher. A written statement is a poor substitute indeed for the intensity and diversity of feelings and insights often generated by these structured experiences. I guess that's why I like running workshops better than writing essays. Their impact on people including me, the leader, is, I am convinced, immeasurably greater than the most powerful words in the language.

III. EVALUATION OF PSYCHO-SOCIAL LEARNING EXPERIENCES

The effects of psycho-social learning experiences were systematically measured and assessed in 1970 as part of the change efforts of the Pilot Communities Program.

A team of teachers in Maine and a team of teacher-advisors in Boston, acting as change agents, were attempting to create an organizational climate in the schools that would be more responsive to changing social and educational needs. But for the change agents to encourage flexibility in the school, they desired to undergo training in group dynamics. I therefore conducted a series of workshops for the two teams using the battery of exercises (psycho-social learning experiences) I had created for the purpose.

Both the Boston Resource Team and the Maine Group Process Team were tested for attitudinal changes both before and after the workshops by two paper-and-pencil instruments: a "Psycho-Social Learning" instrument and a "Q-Sort" instrument.*

Using these instruments, I hoped to test the validity of my hypothesis--that a client is at a certain point before experiencing psycho-social learning and that after the experience, he is at a different point. Built into this testing procedure is an assumption that changes in the areas being measured are due primarily to the experience.

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*The Psycho-Social Learning Instrument was designed specifically for this project. It measures variables at the individual and group levels. The Q-Sort Instrument was designed and tested by R. Stephen Jenks of the Wittimore School of Business, University of Ne...

With a given group it is difficult to estimate what specific changes will take place and what variables will be most affected. However, it is easier to speculate on a wide range of variables which might be charged by involvement in psycho-social learning experiences.

Both the Boston and Maine teams completed the post-session instruments on the last day of the workshop. The data was then computerized and analyzed according to individual, group and variable changes.

Both workshops produced what I labeled a "most significant" finding. For the Boston Team there was a significant increase in self-esteem. For the Maine Team there was a greater understanding of their goals as a group. These two outcomes came as a surprise. I re-examined the written instrument forms and sent them through the computer to double-check the accuracy of these results. But the re-run and second analysis only reconfirmed the original interpretation.

The two questionnaires--the Q-Sort instrument and the P.S.L.E. instrument--measured a total of 36 additudinal changes. The differences between pre-session scores and post-session scores ranged from +11 to -10. Most differen- which fell between ±4 and ±6 were labeled "significant." Those above ±7 were labeled "most significant."

The "most significant" attitudinal changes for the Boston Resource Team following their participation in psycho-social learning experiences were as follows:

> Q-Sort Instrument--Team members felt less in need of receiving credit for what they did (-8). At the same time, they felt more aware that they didn't individual increases in self-esteem often there is a concurrent feeling that others don't appreciate him.
>
> P.S.L.E. Instrument--Team members felt less supportive of others, less resourceful as a group and less influential with those outside their group.

It is important to explain at this point that at the beginning of this workshop the team felt defensive as a group. A month previous they had received an evaluation report critical of their activities for the past school year. Further, they regarded me more as an administrator working in a central office than as a member of the team. These two factors probably affected their responses to the two pre-session instruments. As a consequence of working with me and with each other for one week, I sensed that members of the group were brought closer together, and their trust for me was increased. Their responses to the post-session instruments were therefore more accurate and better reflected what they really felt and thought. Their defenses were lowered regarding me, the instruments, and outside evaluators. This explains the overwhelmingly negative traits indicated by the P.S.L.E. instrument.

In general terms, the workshop enabled the members of the Boston team to see their working relationships more realistically. They tended to see themselves and others as less trusting, open and helpful. This was an immediate effect of the workshop experience.

The "most significant" attitudinal changes for the team in Maine were as follows:

> Q-Sort Instrument--Team members felt the A

Second, they felt more open either to work on problems or not, as they desired (+9).

P.S.L.E. Instrument--Team members felt (a), that they were better able to accept those outside the team (+10), and (b), that their resourcefulness as a group had increased (+8).

The findings are consistent. Once a group's purpose is clear it tends to accept others more easily, feel stronger, more resourceful, and less threatened from the outside.

The team in Maine had worked together for one year. At the time of the workshop they were divided, leaderless, and uncertain of their goals. The workshop provided an opportunity to share, listen to one another and reach some consensus about a common purpose. One reason for using psycho-social learning experiences therefore may be to help a group define its goals.

The results from Boston and Maine are in striking contrast. What was most significant for one was least significant for the other. Where there was a positive change in Maine there was a negative change in Boston. The results highlight the differences between the two groups.

The Boston team was a relatively new group. They were inexperienced in working together and accomplishing a task. They were black, and their problems were of the inner-city. They struggled constantly to prove their worth as a team.

The team members in Maine, on the other hand, had worked together as a teaching staff for at least two years and as a team for one year. They were skilled in group [illegible] were verbal, bi-lingual, white, and rural. They had experienced successes during the previous school year and therefore came to the workshop with some confidence.

The cumulative changes in attitudes for the Boston team (51.8) were higher than those in Maine (30). The Maine group had participated in several group dynamics workshops over the past two years. Their sophistication and expertise with this approach to learning was greater than Boston's. What this might indicate is that with a group unfamiliar with psycho-social learning experiences the degree of change will be higher than with an "experienced" group. Also, as stated earlier, the Boston team's trust towards me increased between the administration of the pre-and-post-session instruments. In Maine my credibility was already high when the pre-session instruments were administered.

Later Feedback about the Workshops

After the Boston workshop, one member of the team told me how she used several psycho-social learning experiences at another workshop for teachers in Denver, Colorado. Other members of the Boston team used the same experiences with groups of teachers and students. At the start of the school year in September, several told me how useful the workshop had been in their roles of teacher-advisor and team member.

In Maine, teachers used the experiences to improve group processes in the classroom. Application included:

using small groups for projects;

using non-verbal exercises to depict feelings about

using a group within a group and having pupils observe one another;

using listening exercises to point out how poor classroom communications are;

using problem-solving and conflict-resolution techniques in social studies classes; and

allowing pupils to share in decision making.

A few members of the group process team in Maine are active negotiators for the teachers union. They testify that their experiences with role-playing and communication exercises have increased their ability to negotiate and bargain. Also, their relationship with the school board has improved. Both parties listen better and respect one another more. At their meetings there is less tension, and they use the conflict resolving techniques taught in the workshops.

As a rule, the longer a workshop lasts, the greater is its cumulative impact. With the teachers in Maine I previously led a training session in the summer of 1969 which extended over six weeks. Their comments about the workshop as presented in a questionnaire are revealing. To quote from a few of them:

I learned much more than I can ever say or put down on paper. I discovered many things about myself that I never knew existed. I found out why I never spoke out in a group--the fear of not being understood, and the possibility of my ideas not being accepted by the group. I'm

but I feel I manage to say what or how I think. I feel I really have something good to contribute.

For the first time in my life I really became aware of other people as people rather than objects. As this awareness grew I found myself in a new light. I learned not only to "put myself in their skin" to be aware of them, but I learned a little how to observe myself while in their skin.

I have learned that I fear to hurt others because I fear to lose their affection, that I have judgmental tendencies, tendencies to being selfish, to interpret the actions of others as threatening, to forget their rights when my security is attacked.

Feedback from the students of these teacher-trainees was also interesting. After the school year was well under way, I asked them, "Have you noticed any changes in the behavior of your teachers?" Below is a sampling of their answers:

> They are more concerned. They don't judge a person on the outside. They go deeper and try to help him out and see what's going on.
>
> *
>
> I feel we know them better and they know us better.
>
> *
>
> They pick on us less.
>
> *
>
> We have more fun with them. They don't take us as seriously as before.
>
> *
>
> The student-teacher relationship is different. The teachers are trying to get to know the real you. Their way of teaching is also different.
>
> *
>
> They look like a happier group.
>
> *
>
> I feel we know them better and they know us better.
>
> *
>
> They respect us more and we respect them more.
>
> *
>
> We now have some voice in what takes place in class and school.